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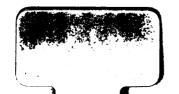
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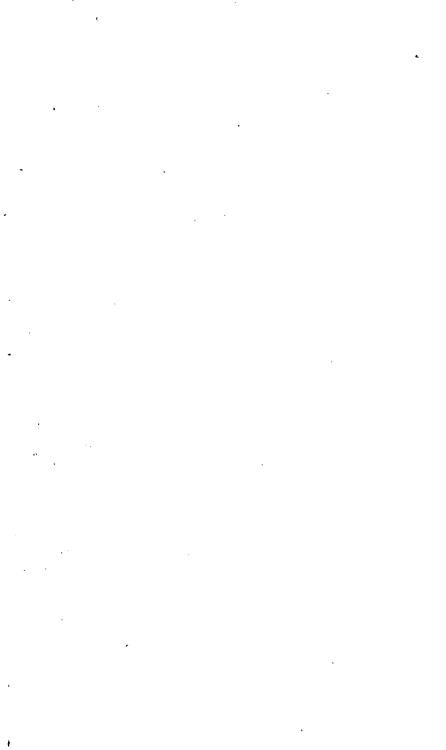
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## E S S A Y

ONTHE

## SLAVERY AND COMMERCE

OFTHE

# H U M A N S P E C I E S,

PARTICULARLY

THE AFRICAN.

TRANSLATED FROM A

LATIN DISSERTATION,

WHICH WAS HONOURED WITH

THE FIRST PRIZE,

IN THE

#### UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE,

FOR THE YEAR 1785,

WITH ADDITIONS.

Neque premendo alium me extulisse velim .-- LIVY.

THE THIRD EDITION.

#### RADIO DE DESCRIPCIO DE DE DESCRIPCIO DE DESC

LONDON, PRINTED:

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RE-PRINTED BY JOSEPH CRUKSHANK, IN MARKET-STREET, BETWEEN
SECOND AND THIRD-STREETS.

M DCC LXXXVII.



#### RIGHT HONOURABLE

# WILLIAM CHARLES COLYEAR, EARL OF PORTMORE, VISCOUNT MILSINTOWN.

MY LORD,

THE dignity of the subject of this little Treatise, not any persuasion of its merits as a literary composition, encourages me to offer it to your Lordship's patronage. The cause of freedom has always been found sufficient, in every age and country, to attract the notice of the generous and humane; and it is therefore, in a more peculiar manner, worthy of the attention and favour of a personage, who holds a distinguished rank in that illustrious island, the very air of which has been determined, upon a late investigation of its laws, to be an antidote against slavery. I feel a satisfaction in the opportunity, which the publication of this treatise affords me, of acknowledging your Lordship's civilities, which can only be equalled by the respect, with which I am,

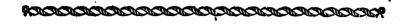
Your Lordship's

much obliged,

and obedient servant,

THOMAS CLARKSON





## Extract from Cowper's Poem, called, THE TASK.

" I would not have a flave to till my ground,

" To carry me, to fan me while I sleep,

" And tremble when I wake, for all the wealth

"That finews bought and fold have ever earn'd.

" No: dear as freedom is, and in my heart's

" Just estimation priz'd above all price,
" I had much rather be myself the slave

And wear the bonds, than fasten them on him."

## PREFACE

Sthe subject of the following work has fortunately become of late a topick of conversation, I cannot begin the presace in a manner more satisfactory to the seelings of the benevolent reader, than by giving an account of those humane and worthy persons, who have endeavoured to draw upon it that share of the publick attention which it has obtained.

Among the well disposed individuals, of different nations and ages, who have humanely exerted themselves to suppress the abject personal flavery, introduced in the original cultivation of the European colonies in the western world, Bartholomew de las Casas, the pious bishop of Chiapa, in the siteenth century, seems to have been the sirst. This amiable man, during his residence in Spanish America, was so sensibly affected at the treatment which the miserable Indians underwent, that he returned to Spain, to make a publick remonstrance before the celebrated emperor Charles the sisth, declaring, that heaven would one day call him to an account for those cruekies, which he then had it in his power to prevent. The speech which he made on the occasion, is now extant, and is a most persect picture of benevolence and piety.

But his intreaties, by the opposition of avarice, were rendered ineffectual: and I do not find by any books which I have read upon the subject, that any other perfon interfered till the last century, when Morgan Godwyn, a British clergyman, distinguished himself in the cause.

The present age has also produced some zealous and able opposers of the colonial slavery. For about the middle of the present century, John Woolman and Anthony Benezet, two respectable members of the religious society called Quakers, devoted much of their time to the subject. The former travelled through several parts of

North

North America on foot, to hold conversations with the members of his own sect, on the impiety of retaining those in a state of involuntary servitude, who had never given them offence. The latter kept a free school at Philadelphia, for the education of black people. He took every opportunity of pleading in their behalf. He published several treatises against slavery, \* and gave an hearty proof of his attachment to the cause, by leaving the whole of his fortune in support of that school, to which he had so generously devoted his time and attention when alive.

Till this time it does not appear, that any bodies of men had collectively interested themselves in endeavouring to remedy the evil. But in the year 1754, the religious society, called Quakers, publickly testified their sentiments upon the subject, || declaring that " to live in ease and plenty by the toil of those, whom fraud and violence had put into their power, was neither consistent with Christianity nor common justice."

Impressed with these sentiments, many of this society immediately liberated their slaves; and though such a measure appeared to be attended with considerable loss to the benevolent individuals, who unconditionally presented them ith their freedom, yet they adopted it with pleasure: nobly considering, that to possess a little, in an honourable way, was better than to possess much, through the medium of injustice. Their example was gradually followed by the rest. A general emancipation of the slaves in the possession of Quakers, at length took place; and so effectually did they serve the cause which they had undertaken, that they denied the claim of membership in their religious community, to all such

1 they had censured the African Trade in the year 1727, but had

taken no publick notice of the colonial flavery till this time.

<sup>\*</sup> A Description of Guinea, with an Inquiry into the Rise and Progress of the lave Trade, &c.—A Caution to Great Britain and her Colonies, in a short Representation of the calamitous tate of the enslaved Negroes in the British Dominons. Besides several smaller pieces.

as should hereafter oppose the suggestions of justice in this particular, either by retaining slaves in their possession, or by being in any manner concerned in the slave trade.

But though this measure appeared, as has been obferved before, to be attended with confiderable lofs to the benevolent individuals who adopted it, yet, as virtue feldom fails of obtaining its reward, it became ultimately beneficial. Many of the flaves, who were thus unconditionally freed, returned without any folicitation to their former masters, to serve them, at stated wages, as free men. The work, which they now did, was found to be better done than before. It was found also, that a greater quantity was done in the same time. Hence less than the former number of labourers was sufficient. From these, and a variety of other circumstances, it appeared, that their plantations were considerably more profitable, when worked by free men, than when worked, as before, by flaves; and that they derived therefore, contrary to their expectations, a confiderable advantage from their benevolence.

Animated by the example of the Quakers, the members of other fects began to deliberate about adopting the same measure. Some of those of the church of England, of the Roman Catholicks, and of the Prefbyterians and Independents, freed their flaves in Pennsylvania. It was agitated in the synod of the Presbyteans, to oblige their members to liberate their flaves. The question was negatived by a majority of but one person, as I am informed; and this opposition seemed to arise rather from a dislike to the attempt of forcing such a measure upon the members of that community, than from any other confideration. I have the pleasure of being credibly informed, that the manumission of slaves, or the employment of free men in the plantations, is now daily gaining ground in North America. flavery be abolished there, (and it is an event, which, from these circumstances, we may reasonably expect to be produced in time) let it be remembered, that the Quakers will have had the merit of its abolition.

Nor

Nor have their brethren here been less assiduous in the cause. As there are happily no slaves in this country. fo they have not had the fame opportunity of shewing their benevolence by a general emancipation. They have not however omitted to shew it as far as they have been able. At their religious meetings they have regularly inquired if any of their members are concerned in the iniquitous African trade. They have appointed a committee for obtaining every kind of information on the subject, with a view to its suppression, and, about three or four years ago, petitioned parliament on the occasion for their interference and support. I am forry to add, that their benevolent application was ineffectual. and that the reformation of an evil, productive of confequences equally impolitick and immoral, and generally acknowledged to have long difgraced our national character, is yet left to the unsupported efforts of piety. morality and justice, against interest, violence and op-pression; and these, I blush to acknowledge, too strongly countenanced by the legislative authority of a country, the basis of whose government is liberty.

Nothing can be more clearly shewn, than that an inexhaustible mine of wealth is neglected in Africa, for the prosecution of this impious traffick; that, if proper measures were taken, the revenue of this country might be greatly improved, its naval strength increased, its colonies in a more sourishing situation, the planters richer, and a trade, which is now a scene of blood and desolation, converted into one, which might be prose-

cuted with advantage and honour.

Such have been the exertions of the Quakers in the cause of humanity and virtue. They are still prosecuting, as far as they are able, their benevolent design; and I should stop here and praise them for thus continuing their humane endeavours, but that I conceive it to be unnecessary. They are acting consistently with the principles of religion. They will find a reward in their own consciences; and they will receive more real pleasure from a single resection on their conduct, than they can possibly experience from the praises of an host of writers.

In giving this short account of those humane and worthy persons, who have endeavoured to restore to their tellow creatures the rights of nature, of which they had been unjustly deprived, I should feel myself unjust, were I to omit two zealous opposers of the colonial tyranny, conspicuous at the present day.

The first is Mr. Granville Sharp. This Gentleman has particularly distinguished himself in the cause of freedom. It is a notorious fact, that, but a few years fince, many of the unfortunate black people, who had been brought from the colonies into this country, were fold in the metropolis to merchants and others, when their masters had no farther occasion for their services; though it was always understood that every person was free, as foon as he landed on the British shore. In consequence of this notion, these unfortunate black people, refused to go to the new masters, to whom they were configned. They were however seized, and forcibly conveyed, under cover of the night, to ships then lying in the Thames, to be retransported to the colonies, and to be delivered again to the planters as merchantable The humane Mr. Sharpe, was the means of putting a stop to this iniquitous trassick. Whenever he gained information of people in fuch a fituation, he caused them to be brought on shore. At a considerable expence he undertook their cause, and was instrumental in obtaining the famous decree in the case of Somerfett, that as foon as any person whatever set his foot in this country, he came under the protection of the British laws, and was consequently free. Nor did he interfere less honourably in that cruel and disgraceful case, in the summer of the year 1781, when an hundred and thirty two negroes, in their passage to the colonies, were thrown into the sea alive, to defraud the underwriters; but his pious endeavours were by no means attended with the same success. To enumerate his many laudable endeavours in the extirpation of tyranny and oppression, would be to swell the presace into a volume: fuffice it to fay, that he has written several books on the fubject,

fubject, and one particularly, which he distinguishes by

the title of " A Limitation of flavery."

The fecond is the Rev. James Ramfay. This gentleman resided for many years in the West-Indies, in the clerical office. He perused all the colonial codes of law. with a view to find if there were any favourable clauses, by which the grievances of flaves could be redreffed: but he was feverely disappointed in his pursuits. He published a treatise, since his return to England, called An Essay on the Treatment and Conversion of African Slaves in the British Sugar Colonies, which I recommend to the perusal of the humane reader. This work reslects great praise upon the author, fince, in order to be of service to this fingularly oppressed part of the human species, he compiled it at the expence of forfeiting that friendship, which he had contracted with many in those parts, during a feries of years, and at the hazard, as I am credibly informed, of fuffering much in his private property, as well as of subjecting himself to the ill will and perfecution of numerous individuals.

This Essay on the Ireatment and Conversion of African Slaves, contains so many important truths on the colonial slavery, and has come so home to the planters, (being written by a person who has a thorough knowledge of the subject) as to have occasioned a considerable alarm. Within the last eight months, two publications have expressly appeared against it. One of them is intitled "Cursory Remarks on Mr. Ramsay's Essay;" the other an "Apology for Negroe Slavery." On each of these I am bound, as writing on the subject, make a few remarks.

The curfory remarker infinuates, that Mr. Ramfay's account of the treatment is greatly exaggerated, if not wholly false. To this I shall make the following reply. I have the honour of knowing several disinterested gentlemen, who have been acquainted with the West Indian islands for years. I call them disinterested, because they have neither had a concern in the African trade, nor in the colonial slavery: and I have heard these unanimously

moully affert, that Mr. Ramfay's account is so far from being exaggerated, or taken from the most dreary pictures that he could find, that it is absolutely below the truth; that he must have omitted many instances of cruelty, which he had seen himself; and that they only wondered, how he could have written with so much moderation upon the subject. They allow the Cursory Remarks to be excellent as a composition, but declare that it is persectly devoid of truth.

But the cursory remarker does not depend so much on the circumstances which he has advanced, (nor can he, since they have no other existence than in his own brain) as on the instrument detraction. This he has used with the utmost virulence through the whole of his publication, artfully supposing, that if he could bring Mr. Ramsay's reputation into dispute, his work would fall of course, as of no authenticity. I submit this simple question to the reader. When a writer, in attempting to silence a publication, attacks the character of its author, rather than the principles of the work itself, is it not a proof that the work itself is unquestionable, and that this writer is at a loss to find an argument against it?

But there is fomething fo very ungenerous in this mode of replication, as to require farther notice. For if this is the mode to be adopted in literary disputes, what writer can be safe? Or who is there, that will not be deterred from taking up his pen in the cause of virtue? There are circumstances in every person's life, which, if given to the publick in a malevolent manner, and without explanation, might effentially injure him in the eyes of the world; though, were they explained, they would be even reputable. The curfory remarker has adopted this method of dispute; but Mr. Ramjay has explained himself to the satisfaction of all parties, and has refuted him in every point. The name of this curfory remarker is Tobin: a name, which I feel myself obliged to hand down with detestation, as far as I am able; and with an hint to future writers, that they will do themselves more credit, and serve more effectually the cause which they undertake, if on such occasions they attack the work, rather than the character of the writer, who affords them a subject for their lucubrations.

Nor is this the only circumstance, which induces me to take such particular notice of the Cursory Remarks. I feel it incumbent upon me to rescue an injured person from the cruel aspersions that have been thrown upon him, as I have been repeatedly informed by those, who have the pleasure of his acquaintance, that his character is irreproachable. I am also interested myself. For it such detraction is passed over in silence, my own reputation, and not my work, may be attacked by an ano-

nymous hireling in the cause of slavery.

The Apology for Negroe Slavery is almost too despicable a composition to merit a reply. I have only therefore to observe, (as is frequently the case in a bad cause, or where writers do not confine themselves to truth) that the work refutes itself. This writer, speaking of the flave-trade, afferts, that people are never kidnapped on the coast of Africa. In speaking of the treatment of slaves, he afferts again, that it is of the very mildest nature, and that they live in the most comfortable and happy manner imaginable. To prove each of his affertions, he proposes the following regulations. That the stealing of slaves from Africa should be felony. That the premeditated murder of a slave by any person on board, should come under the same denomination. That when flaves arrive in the colonies, lands should be allotted for their provisions, in proportion to their number, or commissioners should see that a sufficient quantity of found wholesome provisions is purchased. That they should not work on Sundays and other holy-days. extra labour, or night-work, out of crop, should be pro-That a limited number of stripes should be inflicted upon them. That they should have annually a fuit of clothes. That old infirm flaves should be properly cared for, &c .-- Now it can hardly be conceived, that if this author had tried to injure his cause, or contradict himself, he could not have done it in a more effectual manner, than by this proposal of these salutary regulations.

regulations. For to fay that flaves are honourably obtained on the coast; to say that their treatment is of the mildest nature, and yet to propose the above-mentioned regulations as necessary, is to refute himself more clearly, than I confess myself to be able to do it: and I have only to request, that the regulations proposed by this writer, in the defence of slavery, may be considered as so many proofs of the affertions contained in my own work.

I shall close my account with an observation, which is of great importance in the present case. Of all the publications in favour of the flave-trade, or the fublequent flavery in the colonies, there is not one, which has not been written, either by a chaplain to the African factories, or by a merchant, or by a planter, or by a person whose interest has been connected in the cause which he has taken upon him to defend. Of this description are Mr. Tobin, and the Apologist for Negroe Slavery. While on the other hand those, who have had as competent a knowledge of the subject, but not the same interest as themselves, have unanimously condemned it: and many of them have written their sentiments upon it, at the hazard of creating an innumerable host of enemies, and of being subjected to the most malignant opposition. Now, which of these are we to believe on the occasion? Are we to believe those, who are parties concerned, who are interested in the practice?—But the question does not admit of a dispute.

Concerning my own work, it seems proper to observe, that when the original Latin Differtation, as the title page expresses, was honoured by the University of Cambridge with the first of their annual prizes for the year 1785, I was waited upon by some gentlemen of respectability and consequence, who requested me to publish it in English. The only objection which occurred to me was this; that having been prevented, by an attention to other studies, from obtaining that critical knowledge of my own language, which was necessary for an English composition, I was fearful of appearing before the publick eye: but that, as they slattered me with the

hope, that the publication of it might be of use, I would certainly engage to publish it, if they would allow me to postpone it for a little time, till I was more in the habit of writing. They replied, that as the publick attention was now excited to the case of the unfortunate Africans, it would be serving the cause with double the essect, if it were to be published within a few months. This argument prevailed. Nothing but this circumstance could have induced me to offer an English composition to the inspection of an host-of criticks: and I trust therefore that this circumstance will plead much with the benevolent reader, in favour of those faults, which he may find in the present work.

Having thus promifed to publish it, I was for some time doubtful from which of the copies to translate. There were two, the original, and an abridgement. The latter (as these academical compositions are generally of a certain length) was that which was sent down to Cambridge, and honoured with the prize. I was determined however, upon consulting with my friends, to translate from the former. This has been faithfully done with but sew \* additions. The reader will probably perceive the Latin idiom in several passages of the work, though I have endeavoured, as far as I have been able, to avoid it. And I am so sensible of the disadvantages under which it must yet lie, as a translation, that I wish I had written upon the subject, without any reference at all to the original copy.

It will perhaps be asked, from what authority I have collected those facts, which relate to the colonial slavery. I reply, that I have had the means of the very best of information on the subject; having the pleasure of being acquainted with many, both in the naval and military departments, as well as with several others, who have been long acquainted with America and the West-Indian islands.

<sup>\*</sup> The inflance of the *Dutch* colonifts at the Cape, in the first part of the Essay; the description of an African battle, in the second; and the poetry of a negroe girl in the third, are the only considerable additions that have been made.

islands. The facts therefore which I have related, are compiled from the disinterested accounts of these gentlemen, all of whom, I have the happiness to say, have coincided, in the minutest manner, in their descriptions. It must be remarked too, that they were compiled, not from what these gentlemen heard, while they were resident in those parts, but from what they actually saw. Nor has a single instance been taken from any book whatever upon the subject, except that from Considerations sur la Colonie de St. Dominique, in the latter part of Chap. ix, and this book was published in France, in the year 1777, by authority.

I have now the pleasure to say, that the accounts of these difinterested gentlemen, whom I consulted on the occasion, are confirmed by all the books which I have ever perused upon flavery, except those which have been written by merchants, planters, &c. They are confirmed by Sir Hans Sloane's Voyage to Barbadoes; Griffth Hughes's History of the same island, printed 1750; an Account of North America, by Thomas Jefferies, 1761; all Benezet's works, &c. &c. and particularly by Mr. Ramfay's Essay on the Treatment and Conversion of the African Slaves in the British Sugar Colonies; a work which is now firmly established; and, I may add, in a very extraordinary manner, in consequence of the controversy which this gentleman has sustained with the Cursory Remarker, by which several facts which were mentioned in the original copy of my own work, before the controversy began, and which had never appeared in any work upon the subject, have been brought to light. Nor has it received less support from a letter. published only last week, from Capt. J. S. Smith, of the Royal Navy, to the Rev. Mr. Hill; on the former of whom too high encomiums cannot be bestowed, for standing forth in that noble and difinterested manner, in behalf of an injured character.

I have now only to folicit the reader again, that he will make a favourable allowance for the present work, not only from those circumstances which I have mentioned, but from the consideration, that only two months

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are allowed by the University for these their annual compositions. Should he however be unpropitious to my request, I must console myself with the reslection, (a reslection that will always afford me pleasure, even amidst the censures of the great,) that by undertaking the cause of the unfortunate Africans, I have undertaken, as far as my abilities would permit, the cause of injured innocence.

London, June 1st, 1786.

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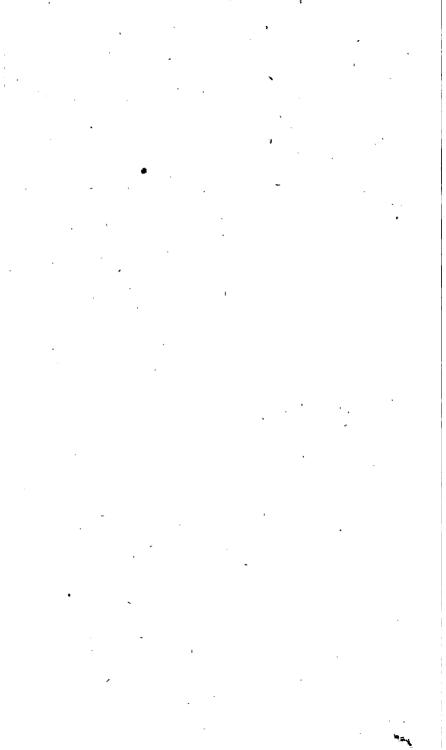
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# E S S A Y

ON THE

## SLAVERY AND COMMERCE

OF THE

# HUMAN SPECIES.

IN THREE PARTS.



PART I.

## THE HISTORY OF SLAVERY.

#### C H A P. I.

HEN civilized, as well as barbarous nations, have been found, through a long succession of ages, uniformly to concur in the same customs, there seems to arise a presumption, that such customs are not only eminently useful, but are founded also on the principles of justice. Such is the case with respect to Slavery: it has had the concurrence of all the nations, which history has recorded, and the repeated practice of ages from the remotest antiquity, in its favour. Here then is an argument, deduced from the general consent and agreement of mankind, in favour of the proposed subject: but alas! when we restect that the people, thus reduced to a state of servitude, have had the same feelings with

with ourselves; when we resect that they have had the same propensities to pleasure, and the same aversions from pain; another argument seems immediately to arise in opposition to the former, deduced from our own feelings and that divine sympathy, which nature has implanted in our breasts, for the most useful and generous of purposes. To ascertain the truth therefore, where two such opposite sources of argument occur; where the force of custom pleads strongly on the one hand, and the feelings of humanity on the other; it is a matter of much importance, as the diginity of human nature is concerned, and the rights and liberties of mankind will be involved in its discussion.

It will be necessary, before this point can be determined, to consult the History of Slavery, and to lay before the reader, in as concise a manner as possible, a general view of it from its earliest appearance to the present day.

The first, whom we shall mention here to have been reduced to a state of servitude, may be comprehended in that class, which is usually denominated the Mercenary. It consisted of free-born citizens, who, from the various contingencies of fortune, had become so poor, as to have recourse for their support to the service of the rich. Of this kind were those, both among the Egyptians and the lews, who are recorded in the \* sacred writings. † The Grecian Theses also were of this description, as well as those among the Romans, from whom the class receives its appellation, the | Mercenarii.

We may observe of the above mentioned, that their fituation was in many instances similar to that of our own

fervants.

† The Thetes appear very early in the Grecian History. Od. Homer.  $\triangle$ . 642.

<sup>\*</sup> Genesis, Ch. 47. Leviticus xxv. 39. 40.

The median of these is frequent among the classics; they were called in general mercenarii, from he circumstances of heir hire, as a quibus, non male præcipiun, qui i a juben ui, ut mercenariis, operam exigendam, justa præbenda. Cicero de off. But they are sometimes mentioned in the law books by the name of liberi, from the circumstances of their birth, o distinguish hem from the alieni, or foreigners, as Justinian. D. 7. 8. 4.—Id. 21. 1. 25. &c. &c. &c.

fervants. There was an express contract between the parties: they could, most of them, demand their discharge, if they were ill used by their respective masters; and they were treated therefore with more humanity than those, whom we usually distinguish in our language by the appellation of Slaves.

As this class of servants was composed of men, who had been reduced to such a situation by the contingences of fortune, and not by their own misconduct; so there was another among the ancients, composed entirely of those, who had suffered the loss of liberty from their own imprudence. To this class may be reduced the Grecian Prodigals, who were detained in the service of their creditors, till the fruits of their labour were equivalent to their debts; the delinquents, who were fentenced to the oar; and the German enthusiasts, as mentioned by Tacitus, who were so immoderately charmed with gaming, as, when every thing elfe was gone, to have staked their liberty and their very felves. "The lofer," fays he, " goes into a voluntary servitude, and though younger " and stronger than the person with whom he played, " patiently fuffers himself to be bound and fold. Their ef perseverance in so bad a custom is stilled honour. "The flaves, thus obtained, are immediately exchanged " away in commerce, that the winner may get rid of " the scandal of his victory."

To enumerate other instances, would be unnecessary: it will be sufficient to observe, that the servants of this class were in a far more wretched situation, than those of the former; their drudgery was more intense; their treatment more severe; and their was no retreat at pleasure, from the frowns and lashes of their despotick massers.

Having premised this, we may now proceed to a general division of slavery, into voluntary and involuntary. The voluntary will comprehend the two classes, which we have already mentioned; for, in the first instance, there was a contract, founded on consent; and in the second, there was a choice of engaging or not in those practices, the known consequences of which were servi-

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tude. The involuntary, on the other hand, will comprehend those, who were forced, without any such condition or choice, into a situation, which as it tended to degrade a part of the human species, and to class it with the brutal, must have been, of all human situations, the most wretched and insupportable. These are they, whom we shall consider solely in the present work. We shall therefore take our leave of the former, as they were mentioned only, that we might state the question with greater accuracy, and be the better enabled to reduce it to its proper limits.

#### C H A P. II.

The first that will be mentioned, of the involuntary, were prisoners of war. \* "It was a law, established from time immemorial among the nations of antiquity, to oblige those to undergo the severities of servitude. " whom victory had thrown into their hands." Conformably with this, we find all the Eastern nations unanimous in the practice. The same custom prevailed among the people of the West; for as the Helots became the flaves of the Spartans, from the right of conquest only, so prisoners of war were reduced to the same situation by the rest of the inhabitants of Greece. By the same principles that actuated these, were the Romans also influenced. Their History will confirm the fact: for how many cities are recorded to have been taken; how many armies to have been vanquished in the field, and the wretched furvivors, in both instances, to have been doomed to servitude? It remains only now to observe, in shewing this custom to have been universal, that all those nations which affifted in overturning the Roman Empire, though many and various, adopted the same measures; for we find it a general maxim in their polity, that whoever should fall into their hands as a prisoner of war, should immediately be reduced to the condition of a flave.

<sup>\*</sup> Xenoph. L. 7. fin.

It may here, perhaps, be not unworthy of remark, that the involuntary were of greater antiquity than the voluntary flaves. The latter are first mentioned in the time of Pharaoh: they could have arisen only in a state of society; when property, after its division, had become so unequal, as to multiply the wants of individuals; and when government, after its establishment; had given security to the possessor by the punishment of crimes.—Whereas the former seem to be dated with more propriety from the days of Nimrod; who gave rise probably to that inseparable idea of victory and servitude, which we find among the nations of antiquity, and which has existed uniformly since, in one country or another, to the present day.\*

Add to this, that they might have arisen even in a state of nature, and have been coeval with the quarrels

of mankind.

#### CHAP. III.

But it was not victory alone, or any presupposed right, founded in the damages of war, that afforded a pretence for invading the liberties of mankind: the honourable light, in which piracy was considered in the uncivilized ages of the world, contributed not a little to the flavery of the human species. Piracy had a very early beginning. "The Grecians," † says Thucydides, "in their primitive state, as well as the contemporary barbarians, who inhabited the sea coasts and islands, gave themselves wholly to it; it was, in short, their only profession and support." The writings of Homer are sufficient of themselves to establish this account. They shew it to have been a common practice at so early a period as that of the Trojan war; and abound with many lively descriptions

POPE.

<sup>\* &</sup>quot; Proud Nimrod first the bloody chace began, " A mighty hunter, and his prey was man."

<sup>†</sup> Thucydides. I. 1. sub initios

scriptions of it, which, had they been as groundless as they are beautiful, would have frequently spared the figh

of the reader of sensibility and reflection.

The piracies, which were thus practifed in the early' ages, may be considered as publick or private. In the former, whole crews embarked for the + benefit of their respective tribes. They made descents on the sea coasts, carried off cattle, surprised whole villages, put many of the inhabitants to the fword, and carried others into sla-

In the latter, individuals only were concerned, and the emolument was their own. These landed from their ships, and, going up into the country, concealed themselves in the woods and thickets; where they waited every opportunity of catching the unfortunate shepherd or hufbandman alone. In this fituation they fallied out upon him, dragged him on board, conveyed him to a foreign

market, and fold him for a flave.

To this kind of piracy Ulysses alludes, in opposition to the former, which he had been just before mentioning, in his question to Eumœus.

\* " Did pirates wait, till all thy friends were gone, " To catch thee fingly with thy flocks alone;

" Say, did they force thee from thy fleecy care,

" And from thy fields transport and fell thee here?

But no picture, perhaps, of this mode of depredation, is equal to that, with which ! Xenophon prefents us in the simple narrative of a dance. He informs us that the Grecian army had concluded a peace with the Paphlagonians, and that they entertained their embassadors in confequence with a banquet, and the exhibition of various feats of activity. "When the Thracians," fays he, had " performed the parts allotted them in this entertainment, " some Ænianian and Magnetian soldiers rose up, and,

<sup>- &</sup>quot;the strongest," says he, "engaging in these

<sup>\*</sup> Homer. Odyss. L. 15. 385.

<sup>‡</sup> Xenoph. L. 6. sub initio.

" accoutred in their proper arms, exhibited that dance, which is called Karpæa. The figure of it is thus. One of them, in the character of an husbandman, is seen to till his land, and is observed, as he drives his plough, to look frequently behind him, as if apprehensive of danger. Another immediately appears in sight, in the character of a robber. The husbandman, having seen him previously advancing, snatches up his arms. A battle ensues before the plough. The whole of this performance is kept in perfect time with the musick of the slute. At length the robber, having got the better of the husbandman, binds him, and drives him off with his team. Sometimes it happens that the husbandman subdues the robber: in this case the scene is only reversed, as the latter is then bound and driven off by the former."

It is scarcely necessary to observe, that this dance was a representation of the general manners of men, in the more uncivilized ages of the world; shewing that the husbandman and shepherd lived in continual alarm, and that there were people in those ages, who derived their pleasures and fortunes from kidnapping and enslaving their fellow creatures.

We may now take notice of a circumstance in this narration, which will lead us to a review of our first affertion on this point, "that the honourable light, in which "piracy was confidered in the times of barbarism, con-" tributed not a little to the flavery of the human spe-"cies." The robber is represented here as frequently defeated in his attempts, and as reduced to that deplorable situation, to which he was endeavouring to bring another. This shews the frequent difficulty and danger of his undertakings: people would not tamely refign their lives or liberties, without a struggle. They were sometimes prepared; were superior often, in many points of view, to these invaders of their liberty; there were an hundred accidental circumstances frequently in their favour. These adventures therefore required all the skill, strength, agility, valour, and everything, in short, that may be supposed to constitute heroism, to conduct them

them with fuccess. Upon this idea piratical expeditions first came into repute, and their frequency afterwards, together with the danger and fortitude, that were inseparably connected with them, brought them into such credit among the barbarous nations of antiquity, that of all human professions, piracy was the most honourable. \*

The notions then, which were thus annexed to piratical expeditions, did not fail to produce those consequences, which we have mentioned before. They afforded an opportunity to the views of avarice and ambition, to conceal themselves under the mask of virtue. They excited a spirit of enterprize, of all others the most irressible, as it subsisted on the strongest principles of action, emolument and honour. Thus could the vilest of passions be gratified with impunity. People were robbed, stolen, murdered, under the pretended idea that these were reputable adventures: every enormity in short was committed, and dressed up in the habiliments of honour.

But as the notions of men in the less barbarous ages, which followed, became more corrected and refined, the practice of piracy began gradually to disappear. had hitherto been supported on the grand columns of emolument and bonour. When the latter therefore was removed, it received a confiderable shock; but, alas! it had still a pillar for its support! avarice, which exists in all states, and which is ready to turn every invention to its own ends, strained hard for its preservation. had been produced in the ages of barbarism; it had been pointed out in those ages as lucrative, and under this notion it was continued. People were still stolen; many were intercepted (some, in their pursuits of pleafure, others, in the discharge of their several occupations) by their own countrymen; who previously laid in wait for them, and fold them afterwards for flaves; while others seized by merchants, who traded on the different coasts, were torn from their friends and connections. and

<sup>\*</sup> Thucydides. L. 1. sub initio. Sextus. Empiricus. Schol. &c. &c.

and carried into flavery. The merchants of Theffaly, if we can credit \* Aristophanes who never spared the vices of, the times, were particularly infamous for the latter kind of depredation; the Athenians were notorious for the former; for they had practifed these robberies to such an alarming degree of danger to individuals, that it was found necessary to enact a + law, which punished kidnappers with death—But this is sufficient for our present purpose; it will enable us to affert, that there were two classes of involuntary slaves among the ancients, of those who were taken publickly in a state of war, and of those who were privately stolen in a state of innocence and peace. We may now add, that the children and descendents of these composed a third.

#### C H A P. IV.

It will be proper to fay fomething here concerning the fituation of the unfortunate men, who were thus doomed to a life of servitude. To enumerate their various employments, and to describe the miseries which they endured in consequence, either from the severity, or the long and constant application of their labour, would exceed the bounds we have proposed to the prefent work. We shall confine ourselves to their personal treatment, as depending on the power of their mafters, and the protection of the law. Their treatment, if confidered in this light, will equally excite our pity and abhorrence. They were beaten, starved, tortured, murdered at discretion: they were dead in a civil sense; they had neither name nor tribe; were incapable of a judicial process; were in short without appeal. Poor unfortunate men! to be deprived of all possible protection! to suffer the bitterest of injuries without the posfibility of redrefs! to be condemned unheard! to be murdered

<sup>\*</sup> Aristoph. Plut. Act. 2. Scene 5. † Zenoph, L. 1.

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murdered with impunity! to be confidered as dead in that state, the very members of which they were sup-

porting by their labours!

Yet such was their general situation: there were two places however, where their condition, if considered in this point of view, was more tolerable. The Ægyptian slave, though perhaps of all others the greatest drudge, yet if he had time to reach the \* temple of Hercules, found a certain retreat from the persecution of his master; and he received additional comfort from the reslection, that his life, whether he could reach it or not, could not be taken with impunity. Wise and falutary law! how often must it have curbed the insolence of power, and stopped those passions in their progress, which had otherwise been destructive to the slave!

But though the perfons of flaves were thus greatly secured in Ægypt, yet there was no place so favourable to them as Athens. They were allowed a greater liberty of speech; + they had their convivial meetings, their amours, their hours of relaxation, pleasantry, and mirth; they were treated, in short, with so much humanity in general, as to occasion that observation of Demosthenes, in his fecond Philippick, "that the condition of a flave, " at Athens, was preferable to that of a free citizen. in many other countries." But if any exception happened (which was fometimes the case) from the general treatment described; if persecution took the place of lenity, and made the fangs of servitude more pointed than before, † they had then their temple, like the Ægyptian, for refuge; where the legislature was so attentive, as to examine their complaints, and to order them, if they were founded in justice, to be fold to another master. Nor was this all: they had a privilege infinitely

<sup>\*</sup> Herodotus. L. 2. 113.

t 'Atq id ne vos miremini, Homines servulos.

<sup>&</sup>quot; Potare, amare, atq ad cœnam condicere,

<sup>&</sup>quot; Licet hoc Athenis.

<sup>&</sup>quot; Plautus. Sticho.

<sup>\*</sup> Aristoph. Horæ. Eupolis.

infinitely greater than the whole of these. They were allowed an opportunity of working for themselves, and if their diligence had procured them a sum equivalent with their ransom, they could immediately, on paying it down, \* demand their freedom for ever. This law was, of all others, the most important; as the prospect of liberty, which it afforded, must have been a continual source of the most pleasing resections, and have greatly sweetened the draught, even of the most bitter slavery.

Thus then, to the eternal honour of Agypt and Athens, they were the only places that we can find, where flaves were confidered with any humanity at all. The rest of the world seemed to vie with each other, in the debasement and oppression of these unfortunate people. They used them with as much severity as they chose; they measured their treatment only by their own passion and caprice; and, by leaving them on every occasion, without the possibility of an appeal, they rendered their situation the most melancholy and intolerable, that can possibly be conceived.

#### C H A P. V.

As we have mentioned the barbarous and inhuman treatment that generally fell to the lot of slaves, it may not be amiss to inquire into the various circumstances by which it was produced.

The first circumstance, from whence it originated, was the commerce: for if men could be considered as possessions; if, like cattle, they could be bought and sold, it will not be difficult to suppose, that they could be

<sup>\*</sup> To this privilege Plautus alludes in his Cafina, where he introduces a flave, speaking in the following manner.

<sup>&</sup>quot;Quid tu me vero libertate territas?
"Quod fi tu nolis, filiusque etiam tuus
"Vobis invitis, atq amborum ingratiis.

<sup>&</sup>quot; Una libella liber possum fieri.

held in the same consideration, or treated in the same manner. The commerce therefore, which was begun in the primitive ages of the world, by classing them with the brutal species, and by habituating the mind to consider the terms of brute and slave as synonimous, soon caused them to be viewed in a low and despicable light, and as greatly inferiour to the human species. Hence proceeded that treatment; which might not unreasonably be supposed to arise from so low an estimation. They were tamed, like beasts, by the stings of hunger and the lash, and their education was directed to the same end, to make them commodious instruments of labour for their possessor.

This treatment, which thus proceeded in the ages of barbarism, from the low estimation, in which slaves were unfortunately held from the circumstances of the commerce, did not fail of producing, in the same instant, its own effect. It depressed their minds; it numbed their faculties; and, by preventing those sparks of genius from blazing forth, which had otherwise been conspicuous; it gave them the appearance of being endued with inferior capacities than the rest of mankind. This effect of the treatment had made so considerable a progress, as to have been a matter of observation in the days of Homer.

For half his fenses Jove conveys away,
Whom once he dooms to see the service day.

Thus then did the commerce, by classing them originally with brutes, and the consequent treatment, by cramping their abilities and hindering them from becoming conspicuturs, give to these unfortunate people, at a very early period, the most unfavourable appearance. The rising generations, who received both the commerce and treatment from their ancestors, and who had always been accustomed to behold their effects, did not consider these effects as incidental: they judged only from what they saw; they believed the appearances to be real; and hence arose

the combined principle, that flaves were an inferiour order of men, and perfectly void of understanding. Upon this principle it was, that the former treatment began to be fully confirmed and established; and as this principle was handed down and disseminated, so it became, in succeeding ages, an excuse for any severity, that despotish might suggest.

We may observe here, that as all nations had this excuse in common, as arising from the circumstances abovementioned, so the Greeks first, and the Romans afterwards, had an additional excuse, as arising from their own

vanity.

The former having conquered Troy, and having united themselves under one common name and interest, began. from that period, to distinguish the rest of the world by the title of barbarians; inferring by fuch an appellation, \* " that they were men who were only noble in their own country; that they had no right, from their na-" ture, to authority or command; that, on the contrary, " fo low were their capacities, they were destined by na-"ture to obey, and to live in a state of perpetual drudgery " and fubjugation." Conformable with this opinon was the treatment, which was accordingly prescribed to a barbarian. The philosopher Aristotle himself, in the advice which he gave to his pupil Alexander, before he went upon his Afiatick expedition, + intreated him to "use " the Greeks, as it became a general, but the barbarians, " as it became a master; consider, says he, the former " as friends and domesticks; but the latter, as brutes and " plants;" inferring that the Greeks, from the superiority of their capacities, had a natural right to dominion, and that the rest of the world, from the inferiority of their own, were to be confidered and treated as the irrational part of the creation.

Now, if we consider that this was the treatment, which they judged to be absolutely proper for people of this description, and that Aheir slaves were uniformly those,

<sup>\*</sup> Aristotle. Polit. Ch. 2. et inseq.

<sup>†</sup> Plutarch. de Fortun. Alexand. Orat. 1.

whom they termed barbarians; being generally such, as were either kidnapped from Barbary, or purchased from the barbarian conquerors in their wars with one another; we shall immediately see, with what an additional excuse their own vanity had furnished them for the sallies of caprice and passion.

To refute these cruel sentiments of the ancients, and to shew that their slaves were by no means an inferiour order of beings than themselves, may perhaps be considered as an unnecessary task; particularly, as having shewn, that the causes of this inferiour appearance were incidental, arising, on the one hand, from the combined effects of the treatment and commerce, and, on the other, from vanity and pride, we seem to have resuted them already. But we trust that some sew observations, in vindication of these unfortunate people, will neither be unacceptable nor improper.

How then shall we begin the refutation? Shall we say with Seneca, who faw many of the flaves in question, What is a knight, or a libertine, or a flave? Are they on not names, assumed either from injury or ambition?" Or, shall we say with him on another oceasion, "Let us consider that he, whom we call our slave, is born in " the same manner as ourselves; that he enjoys the same 16 sky, with all its heavenly luminaries; that he breathes, that he lives, in the same manner as ourselves, and, in the same manner, that he expires." These confiderations, we confess, would furnish us with a plentiful fource of arguments in the case before us; but we decline their affistance. How then shall we begin? Shall we enumerate the many instances of fidelity, patience, or valoue, that are recorded of the fervile race? Shall we entinerate the many important services, that they fer, seed both to the individuals and the community, under whom they lived? Here would be a fecond fource. from whence we could collect fufficient materials to shew, that there was no inferiority in their nature. But we decline to use them. We shall content ourselves with some. few instances, that relate to the genius only: we shall mention the names of those of a fervile condition, whose writings.

writings, have escaped the wreck of time, and having been handed down even to the present age, are now to be seen, as so many living monuments, that neither the Grecian, nor Roman genius, was superiour to their own.

The first, whom we shall mention here, is the famous Æsop. He was a Phrygian by birth, and lived in the time of Cræsus, king of Lydia, to whom he dedicated his sables. The writings of this great man, in whatever light we consider them, will be equally entitled to our admiration. But we are well aware, that the very mention of him as a writer of sables, may depreciate him in the eyes of some. To such we shall propose a question, "Whether this species of writing has not been more beneficial to mankind; or whether it has not produced more important events, than any other?"

With respect to the first consideration, it is evident that these fables, as consisting of plain and simple transactions, are particularly easy to be understood; as conveyed in images, they please and seduce the mind; and, as containing a moral, easily deducible on the fide of virtue; that they afford, at the same time, the most weighty precepts of philosophy. Here then are the two grand points of composition, "a manner of expression to be apprehended by the lowest capacities, and \* " (what is confidered as a victory in the art) an happy " conjunction of utility and pleasure." Hence Quintilian recommends them, as fingularly useful, and as admirably adapted, to the puerile age; as a just gradation between the language of the nurse and the preceptor, and as furnishing maxims of prudence and virtue, at a time when the speculative principles of philosophy are too difficult to be understood. Hence also having been introduced by most civilized nations into their system of education, they have produced that general benefit, to which we at first alluded. Nor have they been of less consequence in maturity; but particularly to those of inferiour capacities, or little erudition, whom they have frequently.

<sup>\*</sup> Omne tulit punctum, qui miscuit utile dusci. Horace.

quently served as a guide to conduct them in life, and as a medium, through which an explanation might be

made, on many and important occasions.

With respect to the latter consideration, which is easily deducible from hence, we shall only appeal to the wonderful effect, which the fable, pronounced by Demosthenes against Philip of Macedon, produced among his hearers; or to the fable, which was spoken by Menenius Agrippa to the Roman populace; by which an illiterate multitude were brought back to their duty as citizens, when no other species of oratory could prevail.

To these truly ingenious, and philosophical works of Esop, we shall add those of his imitator l'hædrus, which in purity and elegance of style, are inseriour to none. We shall add also the Lyrick Poetry of Alcman, which is no servile composition; the sublime Morals of Epicte-

tus, and the incomparable comedies of Terence.

Thus then does it appear, that the excuse which was uniformly started in defence of the treatment of slaves, had no foundation whatever either in truth or justice. The instances that we have mentioned above, are sufficient to shew, that there was no inferiority, either in their nature, or their understandings: and at the same time that they resute the principles of the ancients, they afford a valuable session to those, who have been accustomed to form too precipitate a judgment on the abilities of men: for, alas! how often has secret anguish depressed the spirits of those, whom they have frequently censured, from their gloomy and dejected appearance! and how often, on the other hand, has their judgment resulted from their own vanity and pride!

### C H A P. VI.

We proceed now to the consideration of the commerce; in consequence of which, people, endued with the same feelings and saculties as ourselves, were made subject to the laws and limitations of possession.

This

This commerce of the human species was of a very early date. It was founded on the idea that men were property; and, as this idea was coeval with the first order of involuntary flaves, it must have arisen, (if the date, which we previously affixed to that order, be right) in the first practices of barter. The Story of Joseph, as recorded in the facred writings, whom his brothers fold from an envious suspicion of his future greatness, is an ample testimony of the truth of this conjecture. It shews that there were men, even at that early period, who travelled up and down as merchants, collecting not only balm, myrrh, spicery, and other wares, but the human species also, for the purposes of traffick. The instant determination of the brothers, on the first fight of the merchants, to fell him, and the immediate acquiescence of these, who purchased him for a foreign market, prove that this commerce had been then established, not only in that part of the country, where this transaction happened, but in that also, whither the merchants were then travelling with their camels, namely, Æpypt: and they shew farther, that, as all customs require time for their establishment, so it must have existed in the ages, previous to that of Pharaoh; that is, in those ages, which we fixed the first date of involuntary servitude. This commerce then, as appears by the present instance, existed in the earliest practices of barter, and had descended to the Ægyptians, through as long a period of time, as was sufficient to have made it, in the times alluded to, an established custom. Thus was Ægypt, in. those days, the place of the greatest resort; the grand emporium of trade, to which people were driving their merchandize, as to a centre; and thus did it afford, among other opportunities of traffick, the first market that is recorded, for the fale of the human species.

This market, which was thus supplied by the constant concourse of merchants, who resorted to it from various parts, could not fail, by these means, to have been considerable. It received, afterwards, an additional supply from those piracies, which we mentioned to have existed in the uncivilized ages of the world, and which in fact,

it greatly promoted and encouraged; and it became, from these united circumstances, so famous, as to have been known, within a few centuries from the time of Pharaoh, both to the Grecian colonies in Afia, and the Grecian islands. Homer mentions Cyprus and Ægypt as the common markets for flaves, about the times of the Trojan war. Thus Antinous, offended with Ulysses, threatens to fend him to \* one of these places, if he does not instantly depart from his table. The same poet also, in his + hymn to Bacchus, mentions them again, but in a more unequivocal manner, as the common markets for flaves. He takes occasion, in that hymn, to describe the pirates method of scouring the coast, from the circumstance of their having kidnapped Bacchus, as a noble youth, for whom they expected an immense ransom. The captain of the vessel, having dragged him on board, is represented as addressing himself thus, to the steersman:

" Haul in the tackle, hoist aloft the sail,

"Then take your helm, and watch the doubtful gale!

"To mind the captive prey, be our's the care, "While you to Egypt or to Cyprus steer;

There shall be go, unless his friends he'll tell,
Whose ransom-gifts will pay us full as well."

It may not perhaps be confidered as a digression, to mention in few words, by itself, the wonderful concordance of the writings of Moses and Homer with the case before us: not that the former, from their divine authority, want additional support, but because it cannot be unpleasant to see them confirmed by a person, who, being one of the earliest writers, and living in a very remote age, was the first that could afford us any additional proof of the circumstances above-mentioned. Ægypt is represented, in the first book of the sacred writings, as a market for slaves, and, in the second, as famous for

<sup>\*</sup> Hom. Odyst. L. 17. 448.

<sup>†</sup> L. 26. ‡ Exodus. Ch. 1.

for the feverity of its servitude. † The same line, which we have already cited from Homer, conveys to us the same ideas. It points it out as a market for the human species, and by the epither of "bitter Ægypt," (‡ which epithet is peculiarly annexed to it on this occasion) alludes in the strongest manner to that severity and rigour, of which the sacred historian transmitted us the first account.

But, to return. Though Ægypt was the first market recorded for this species of traffick; and though Ægypt, and Cyprus afterwards, were particularly distinguished for it, in the times of the Trojan war; yet they were not the only places, even at that period, where men were bought and sold. The Odyssey of Homer shews that it was then practised in many of the islands of the Ægæan sea; and the Iliad, that it had taken place among those Grecians on the continent of Europe, who had embarked from thence on the Trojan expedition. This appears particularly at the end of the seventh book. A sleet is described there, as having just arrived from Lemnos, with a supply of wine for the Grecian camp. The merchants are described also, as immediately exposing it to sale, and as receiving in exchange, among other articles of barter, "a number of slaves."

It will now be sufficient to observe, that, as other states arose, and as circumstances contributed to make them known, this custom is discovered to have existed among them; that it travelled over all Asia; that it spread through the Grecian and Roman world; was in use among the barbarous nations, which overturned the Roman empire; and was practised therefore, at the same

period, throughout all Europe.

CHAP.

<sup>†</sup> Vide note 1st. page 38.

<sup>†</sup> This strikes us the more forcibly, as it is stilled, "beautiful and well watered," in all other passages where it is mentioned, but this.

## C H A P. VIL.

This flavery and commerce, which had continued for to long a time, and which was thus practifed in Europe at so late a period as that, which succeeded the grand revolutions in the western world, began, as the northern nations were fettled in their conquests, to decline, and, on their full establishment, were abolished. ence of opinion has arisen respecting the cause of their abolition; fome having afferted, that they were the neceffary consequences of the feudal system; while others, fuperiour both in number and in argument, have maintained that they were the natural effects of Christianity. The mode of argument, which the former adopt on this occasion, is as follows. "The multitude of little States." which sprang up from one great one at this Æra, occafioned infinite bickerings and matter for contention. "There was not a state or seignory, which did not want " all the hands they could muster, either to defend their own right, or to dispute that of their neighbours. "Thus every man was taken into the fervice: whom "they armed they must trust: and there could be no "trust but in free men. Thus the barrier between the two natures was thrown down, and flavery was no " more heard of in the west."

That this was not the necessary consequence of such a situation, is apparent. The political state of Greece, in its early history, was the same as that of Europe, when divided, by the seudal system, into an infinite number of small and independent kingdoms. There was the same matter therefore for contention, and the same call for all the hands that could be mustered: the Grecians, in short, in the beroick, were in the same situation in these respects as the seudal barons in the Gothick times. Had this therefore been a necessary effect, there had been a cessation of servitude in Greece, in those ages, in which we have already shewn that it existed.

But

But with respect to Christianity, many and great are the arguments, that it occasioned so desirable an event. It taught, "that all men were originally equal; that the "Deity was no respecter of persons, and that, as all " men were to give an account of their actions here-" after, it was necessary that they should be free." These doctrines could not fail of having their proper influence on those, who first embraced Christianity, from a conviction of its truth; and on those of their descendents afterwards, who, by engaging in the crusades, and hazarding their lives and fortuna there, shewed, at least, an attachment to that religion. We find them accordingly actuated by these principles: we have a positive proof, that the feudal system had no share in the honour of suppressing slavery, but that Christianity was the only cause; for the greatest part of the charters which were granted for the freedom of flaves in those times (many of which are still extant) were granted, " pro amore Dei, " pro mercede anima." They were founded, in short, on religious considerations, " that they might procure "the favour of the Deity, which they conceived themfelves to have forfeited, by the subjugation of those, "whom they found to be the objects of the divine be-" nevolence and attention equally with themselves."

These considerations, which had thus their first origin in Christianity, began to produce their effects, as the different nations were converted; and procured that general liberty at last, which, at the close of the twelfth century, was confpicuous in the west of Europe. What a glorious and important change! Those, who would have had otherwise no hopes, but that their miseries would be terminated by death, were then freed from their servile condition; those, who, by the laws of war, would have had otherwise an immediate-prospect of servitude from the hands of their imperious conquerors, were then exchanged; a custom, which has happily defcended to the present day. Thus, "A numerous class " of men, who formerly had no political existence, and " were employed merely as instruments of labour, be-" came useful citizens, and contributed towards, aug-" menting "menting the force or riches of the fociety, which described them as members;" and thus did the greater part of the Europeans, by their conduct on this occa-fion, affert not only liberty for themselves but for their fellow-creatures also.

### C H A P. VIII.

But if men therefore at a time when under the influence of religion they dercifed their ferious thoughts, abolished slavery, how impious must they appear, who revived it; and what arguments will not present themselves against their conduct! \* The Portuguese, within two centuries after its suppression in Europe, in imitation of those piracies, which we have shewn to have existed in the uncivilized ages of the world, made their descents on Africa, and committing depredations on the coast, † first carried the wretched inhabitants into slavery.

This practice, however trifling and partial it might appear at first, soon became serious and general. A melancholy instance of the depravity of human nature;

\* The following thort history of the African servitude, is taken from Astley's Collection of Voyages, and from the united testimonies of Smyth, Adansoh, Bosman, Moore, and others, who were agents to the different sactories established there; who resided many years in the country; and published their respective histories at their return. These writers, if they are partial at all, may be considered as savourable rather to their own countrymen, than the unfortunate Africans.

† We would not wish to be understood, that slavery was unknown in Africa before the piratical expeditions of the Portuguese, as it appears from the Nubian's Geography, that both the slavery and commerce had been established among the natives with one another. We mean only to affert, that the Portuguese were the first of the Europeans, who made their piratical expeditions, and shewed the way to that slavery, which how makes so disgraceful a sigure in the western colonies of the Europeans. In the term "Europeans," wherever it shall occur in the remaining part of this first differention, we include the Portuguese, and those nations only, who followed their example.

as it shews, that neither the laws nor religion of any country, however excellent the forms of each, are sufficient to bind the consciences of some; but that there are always men, of every age, country, and persuasion, who are ready to sacrifice their dearest principles at the shrine of gain. Our own ancestors, together with the Spaniards, French, and most of the maritime powers of Europe, soon followed the piratical example; and thus did the Europeans, to their eternal infamy, renew a custom, which their own ancestors had so lately exploded, from a conscientiousness of its impiety.

The unfortunate Africans, terrified at these repeated depredations, sled in confusion from the coast, and sought, in the interiour parts of the country, a retreat from the persecution of their invaders. But, alas, they were miserably disappointed! There are sew retreats, that can escape the penetrating eye of avarice. The Europeans still pursued them; they entered their rivers; sailed up into the heart of the country; surprized the unfortunate Africans again; and carried them into

flavery.

But this conduct, though successful at first, defeated afterwards its own ends. It created a more general alarm, and pointed out, at the same instant, the best method of security from suture depredations. The banks of the rivers were accordingly deserted, as the coasts had been before; and thus were the Christian invaders left with-

out a prospect of their prey.

In this fituation however, expedients were not wanting. They now formed to themselves the resolution of settling in the country; of securing themselves by fortified posts; of changing their system of sorce into that of pretended liberality; and of opening, by every species of bribery and corruption, a communication with the natives These plans were put into immediate execution. The Europeans erected their \* forts; landed

<sup>\*</sup> The Persuguese erected their first fort at D'Elmina, in the year 1481, about forty years after Alonzo Gonzales had pointed the Southern Africans out to his countrymen as articles of commerce.

their merchandize; and endeavoured, by a peaceable deportment, by presents, and by every appearance of munificence, to seduce the attachment and confidence of the Africans. These schemes had the desired effect. The gaudy trappings of European art, not only caught their attention, but excited their curiosity: they dazzled the eyes and bewitched the senses, not only of those, to whom they were given, but of those, to whom they were shewn. Thus followed a speedy intercourse with each other, and a confidence, highly favourable to the views of avarice or ambition.

It was now time for the Europeans to embrace the opportunity, which this intercourse had thus afforded them, of carrying their schemes into execution, and of fixing them on such a permanent foundation, as should secure them future success. They had already discovered, in the different interviews obtained, the chiefs of the African tribes. They paid their court therefore to these, and so compleatly intoxicated their senses with the luxuries, which they brought from home, as to be able to leduce them to their defigns. A treaty of peace and commerce was immediately concluded: it was agreed, that the kings, on their part, should, from this period, sentence prisoners of war and convicts to European servitude; and that the Europeans should supply them, in return, with the luxuries of the north. This agreement immediately took place; and thus begun that commerce, which makes so considerable a figure at the present day.

But happy had the Africans been, if those only, who had been justly convicted of crimes, or taken in a just war, had been sentenced to the severities of servitude! How many of those miseries, which afterwards attended them, had been never known; and how would their history have saved those sighs and emotions of pity, which must now ever accompany its perusal. The Europeans, on the establishment of their western colonies, required a greater number of slaves than a strict adherence to the treaty could produce. The princes therefore had only the choice of relinquishing the commerce,

or of consenting to become unjust. They had long experienced the emoluments of the trade; they had acquired a taste for the luxuries it afforded; and they now beheld an opportunity of gratifying it, but in a more extensive manner. Avarize therefore, which was too powerful for justice on this occasion, immediately turned the scale: not only those, who were fairly convicted of ossences, were now sentenced to servitude, but even those who were suspected. New crimes were invented, that new punishments might succeed. Thus was every appearance soon construed into reality; every shadow into a substance; and often virtue into a crime.

Such also was the case with respect to prisoners of war. Not only those were now delivered into slavery, who were taken in a state of publick enmity and injustice, but those also, who, conscious of no injury whatever, were taken in the arbitrary skirmishes of these venal sovereigns. War was now made, not as formerly, from the motives of retaliation and defence, but for the sake of obtaining prisoners alone, and the advantages resulting from their sale. If a ship from Europe came but into sight, it was now considered as a sufficient motive for a war, and as a signal only for an instantance-

ous commencement of hostilities.

But if the African kings could be capable of such injustice, what vices are there, that their consciences would restrain, or what enormities, that we might not expect to be committed? When men once consent to be unjust, they lose, at the same instant with their virtue, a considerable portion of that sense of shame, which, till then, had been found a successful protector against the sallies of vice. From that awful period, almost every expectation is forlorn: the heart is lest unguarded: its great protector is no more: the vices therefore, which so long encompassed it in vain, obtain an easy victory: in crouds they pour into the desenceles avenues, and take possession of the soul: there is nothing now too vile for them to meditate, too impious to perform. Such was the situation of the despotick sovereigns of Africa. They had once ventured to pass the bounds of

virtue, and they foon proceeded to enormity. This was particularly conspicuous in that general conduct, which they uniformly observed, after any unsuccessful conflict. Influenced only by the venal motives of European traffick, they first made war upon the neighbouring tribes, contrary to every principle of justice; and if, by the flight of the enemy, or by other contingencies, they were disappointed of their prey, they made no hesita-tion of immediately turning their arms against their own subjects. The first villages they came to, were always marked on this occasion, as the first objects of their avarice. They were immediatly furrounded, were afterwards set on fire, and the wretched inhabitants feized, as they were escaping from the flames. These, confisting of whole families, fathers, brothers, husbands, wives, and children, were instantly driven in chains to the merchants, and configned to flavery.

To these calamities, which thus arose from the tyranny of the kings, we may now subjoin those, which arose from the avarice of private persons. Many were kidnapped by their own countrymen, who, encouraged by the merchants of Europe, previously lay in wait for them, and sold them afterwards for slaves; while the seamen of the different ships, by every possible artisice, enticed others on board, and transported them to the

regions of servitude.

As these practices are in full force at the present day, it appears that there are four orders of involuntary slaves on the African continent; of \* convicts; of prisoners of war; of those, who are publickly seized by virtue of the authority of their prince; and of those, who are privately kidnapped by individuals.

It remains only to observe on this head, that in the sale and purchase of these the African commerce or

Slave

<sup>\*</sup> In the ancient servitude, we reckoned convicts among the voluntary slaves, because they had it in their power, by a virtuous conduct, to have avoided so melancholy a situation; in the African, we include them in the involuntary, because, as virtues are frequently construed into crimes, from the venal motives of the traffick, no person whatever possesses such a power or choice.

Slave Trade confifts; that they are delivered to the merchants of Europe in exchange for their various commodities; that these transport them to their colonies in the west, where their slavery takes place; and that a fifth order arises there, composed of all such as are born to the native Africans, after their transportation and slavery have commenced.

Having thus explained as much of the history of modern servitude, as is sufficient for the prosecution of our design, we should have closed our account here; but that a work, just published, has surnished us with a singular anecdote of the colonists of a neighbouring nation, which we cannot but relate. The learned \* author, having described the method which the Dutch colonists at the Cape make use of to take the Hottentots and enslave them, takes occasion, in many subsequent parts of the work, to mention the dreadful effects of the practice of slavery; which, as he justly remarks, "leads to all manner of misdemeanours and wicked, finels. Pregant women," says he, "and children in their tenderest years, were not at this time, neither indeed are they ever, rexempt from the effects of the hatred and spirit of vengeance constantly harboured to by the colonists, with respect to the + Boshies-man nation; excepting such indeed as are marked out to be "carried away into bondage."

"Does a colonist at any time get fight of a Boshies"man, he takes fire immediately, and spirits up his
horse and dogs, in order to hunt him with more ardour and fury than he would a wolf, or any other
wild beast? On an open plain, a few colonists on
horseback are always sure to get the better of the
greatest number of Boshies-men that can be brought
together; as the former always keep at the distance

<sup>\*</sup> Andrew Sparrman, M. D. professor of Physick at Stockholm, fellow of the Royal Academy of Sciences in Sweden, and inspector of its cabinet of natural history, whose voyage was translated into English, and published in 1785.

<sup>†</sup> Boshies man, or wild Hottentot.

18 of about an hundred, or an hundred and fifty paces ce (just as they find it convenient) and charging their 66 heavy fire-arms with a very large kind of thot, jump " off: their horses, and rest their pieces in their usual 61 manner on their ramrods, in order that they may shoot whith the greater certainty; so that the balls discharged " by them will fometimes, as I have been affured, go "through the bodies of fix; seven, or eight of the ene-66 my at a time, especially as these latter know no better than to keep close together in a body."---

35.55 And not only is the capture of the Hottentots con-66 fidered by them merely as a party of pleasure, but in 65 cold blood they destroy the bands which nature has "knit between their husbands, and their wives and

se children, &c.!! ....

With what horrour do these passages seem to strike us! What indignation do they feem to raise in our breasts, when we reflect, that a part of the human species are confidered as game, and that parties of pleasure are made for their destruction! The lion does not imbrue his claws in blood, unless called upon by hunger, or provoked by interruption; whereas the merciless Dutch, more savage than the brutes themselves, not only murder their fellow-creatures without any provocation or necessity, but even make a diversion of their sufferings, and enjoy their pain.

End of the First Part.

#### PART II.

T H E

# AFRICAN COMMERCE,

O R

# SLAVE TRADE.

#### C H A P. I.

S we explained the History of Slavery in the first part of this Essay, as far as it was necessary for our purpose, we shall now take the question into consideration, which we proposed at first as the subject of our inquiry, viz. how far the commerce and slavery of the human species, as revived by some of the nations of Europe in the persons of the unfortunate Africans, and as revived, in a great measure, on the principles of antiquity, are consistent with the laws of nature, or the common notions of equity, as established among men.

This question resolves itself into two separate parts for discussion, into the African commerce (as explained in the history of slavery) and the subsequent slavery in the colonies, as founded on the equity of the commerce. The former, of course, will be first examined. For this purpose we shall inquire into the rise, nature, and design of government. Such an inquiry will be particularly useful in the present place; it will afford us that general knowledge of subordination and liberty, which is necessary in the case before us, and will be found, as it were, a source, to which we may frequently refer for many and valuable arguments.

G

It appears that mankind were originally free, and that they possessed an equal right to the soil and produce of the earth. For proof of this, we need only appeal to the divine writings; to the golden age of the poets, which, like other fables of the times, had its origin in truth; and to the institution of the Saturnalia, and of other fimilar festivals; all of which are so many monuments of this original equality of men. Hence then there was no rank, no distinction, no superiour. Every man wandered where he choie, changing his refidence, as a foot attracted his fancy, or suited his convenience, uncon-trouled by his neighbour, unconnected with any but his family. Hence also (as every thing was common) he collected what he chose without injury, and enjoyed without injury what he had collected. Such was the first situation of mankind; \* a state of dissociation and independence.

In this diffociated state it is impossible that men could have long continued. The dangers to which they must have frequently been exposed, by the attacks of sierce and rapacious beasts, by the prædatory attempts of their own species, and by the disputes, of contiguous and independent families; these, together with their inability to defend themselves, on many such occasions, must have incited them to unite. Hence then was society formed on the grand principles of preservation and defence: and as these principles began to operate, in the different parts of the earth, where the different families had roamed, a great number of these societies began to be formed and established; which, taking to themselves particular names from particular occurrences, began to

be perfectly distinct from one another.

As the individuals, of whom these societies were composed, had associated only for their defence, so they experienced, at first, no change in their condition. They

<sup>\*</sup> This conclusion concerning the diffociated state of mankind, is confirmed by all the early writers, with whose descriptions of primitive times no other conclusion is reconcileable.

were still independent and free; they were still without discipline of laws; they had every thing still in common; they pursued the same manner of life; wandering only, in berds, as the earth gave them or resused them sustenance, and doing, as a publick body, what they had been accustomed to do as individuals before. This was the exact situation of the \* Getæ and Scythians, of the † Lybians and Gætulians, of the ‡ Italian Aborigines, and of the || Huns and Alans. They had left their original state of dissociation, and had stepped into that, which has been just described. Thus was the second situation of men a state of independent society.

Having thus joined themselves together, and having formed themselves into several large and distinct bodies, they could not fail of submitting soon to a more considerable change. Their numbers must have rapidly increased, and their focieties, in process of time, have become so populous, as frequently to have experienced the want of sublistence, and many of the commotions and tumults of intestine strife. For these inconveniences however there were remedies to be found. Agriculture would furnish them with that subsistence and support, which the earth, from the rapid increase of its inhabitants, had become unable spontaneously to produce. An assignation of property would not only enforce an application, but excite an emulation, to labour; and government would at once afford a security to the acquisitions of the industrious, and heal the intestine disorders of the community, by the introduction of Laws.

Such then were the remedies, that were gradually applied. The focieties, which had hitherto feen their members, undistinguished either by authority or rank, admitted now of magistratical pre eminence. They were divided into tribes; to every tribe was allotted a particular district for its support, and to every individual his

particular

<sup>\*</sup> Justin. L. 2. C. 2.

<sup>†</sup> Sallust. Bell. Jug.

<sup>\$</sup> Sallust. Bell. Catil.

Ammianus Marcellinus. L. 31. C. 2. et inseq.

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particular spot. \* The Germans, who consisted of many and various nations, were exactly in this situation.— They had advanced a step beyond the Scythians, Gœtulians, and those, whom we described before; and thus was the third situation of mankind a state of fubordinate society.

#### C H A P, II.

As we have thus traced the fituation of man from unbounded liberty to subordination, it will be proper to carry our inquiries farther, and to consider, who first obtained the pre-eminence in these primaval societies,

and by what particular methods it was obtained.

There where only two ways, by which such an event could have been produced, by compulsion or consent.— When mankind first saw the necessity of government, it is probable that many had conceived the desire of ruling. To be placed in a new situation, to be taken from the common herd, to be the first, distinguished among men, were thoughts, that must have had their charms. Let us suppose then, that these thoughts had worked so unusually on the passions of any particular individual, as to have driven him to the extravagant design of obtaining the pre-eminence by force. How could his design have been accomplished? How could he forcibly have usurped the jurisdiction at a time, when, all being equally free, there was not a single person, whose assistance he could command? Add to this, that, in a state of universal liberty, force had been repaid by force, and the attempt had been stated to the usurper.

As empire then could never have been gained at first by compulsion, so it could only have been obtained by consent; and as men were then going to make an important sacrifice, for the sake of their mutual happiness, so he alone could have obtained it, (not whose ambition

had

<sup>\*</sup> Agri pro Numero Cultorum ab universis per vicos occupantur, quos mox inter se secundum dignationem partiuntur. Tacitus. C. 26. de Mor. Germ.

had greatly distinguished him from the rest) but in whose wisdom, justice, prudence, and virtue, the whole community could conside.

To confirm this reasoning, we shall appeal, as before, to facts; and shall consult therefore the history of those nations, which having just lest their former state of independent society, were the very people that established

subordination and government.

The commentaries of Cæsar afford us the following accounts of the ancient Gauls. When any of their kings, either by death, or deposition, made a vacancy in the regal office, the whole nation was immediately convened for the appointment of a successor. In these national conventions; were the regal offices conferred. Every individual had a voice on the occasion, and every individual was free. The person upon whom the general approbation appeared to fall, was immediately advanced to pre-eminence in the state. He was uniformly one, whose actions had made him eminent; whose conduct had gained him previous applause; whose valour the very affembly, that elected him, had themselves witnessed in the field; whose prudence, wildom and justice, having rendered him-fignally ferviceable, had endeared him to his tribe. For this reason, their kingdoms were not hereditary; the fon did not always inherit the virtues of the fire; and they were determined that he alone should possess authority, in whose virtues they could confide. Nor was this all. So fensible were they of the important facrifice they had made; so extremely jealous even of the name of superiority and power, that they limited, by a variety of laws, the authority of the very person, whom they had just elected, from a confidence of his integrity; Ambiorix himself confessing, "that " his people had as much power over him, as he could

"possibly have over his people."
The same custom, as appears from Tacitus, prevailed also among the Germans. They had their national, councils, like the Gauls; in which the regal and ducal offices were confirmed according to the majority of voices. They elected also, on these occasions, those only,

whom

whom their virtue, by repeated trial, had unequivocally distinguished from the rest; and they limited their authority so far, as neither to leave them the power of inflicting imprisonment or stripes, nor of exercising any penal jurisdiction. But as punishment was necessary in a state of civil society, with was permitted to the priests alone, that it might appear to have been inslicted; by the order of the gods, and not by any superiour authority in man.

The accounts which we have thus given of the ancient Germans and Gauls, will be found allo to be equally true of those people, which had arrived at the fame state of subordinate society. We might appeal, for a testimony of this, to the history of the Goths; to the history of the Franks and Saxons; to the history in short; of all those nations, from which the different governments, now conspicuous in Europe, have undeniably sprung. And we might appeal, as a farther proof, to the Americans, who are represented by many of the moderns, from their own ocular testimony, as observing the same customs at the present day.

It remains only to observe; that as these customs prevailed among the different nations described, in their early state of subordinate society, and as they were moreover the customs of their respective ancestors, it appears that they must have been handed down, both by tradition and use, from the first introduction of govern-

ya <sup>t</sup>ali ingermog kennika degar da inger yen kina piro**C**MH a**A. Pi** ka **Hi** a y nomianka yenomian noming bahasa da

In group of the

We may now deduce those general maxims concerning fabordination, and liberty, which we mentioned to have been effentially connected with the subject, and which some, from speculation only, and without any allusion to facts, have been bold enough to deny.

It appears stiff, that liberty is a natural, and government an adventitious right, because all men were origi-

nally free.

It appears secondly, that government is a \* contract; because, in these primorval subordinate societies, we have seen it voluntarily conferred on the one hand, and accepted on the other. We have seen it subject to various restrictions. We have seen its articles, which could then only be written by tradition and use, as perfect and binding as those, which are now committed to letters. We have seen it, in short, partaking of the fæderal nature, as much as it could in a state, which wanted the means of recording its transactions.

It

\* The author has lately read a work, intibled Paley's Moral and Political Philosophy, which, in this one respect, favours those which have been hinted at, as it denies that government was a contract. . "No focial compact was ever made in 14ct,"..." it is to suppose it " possible to call savages out of caves and deferts, to deliberate " upon topicks, which the experience and Audies, and the refine-" ments of civil life alone suggest. Therefore no government in " the universe begun from this original." But there are no grounds for so absurd a supposition; for government, and of course the social compact, does not appear to have been introduced at the time, when families coming out of their caves and deferts, or, in other words, quitting their former difficiated state, joined themselves together. They had lived a confiderable time in fociety, like the Lybians and Gœtulians before-mentioned, and had felt many of the disadvantages of a want of discipline and laws, before government was introduced at all. The author of this Essay, before he took into confideration the origin of government, was determined, in a matter of such importance, to be biassed by no opinion whatever, and much less to indulge himself in speculation. He was determined folely to adhere to fact, and, by looking into the accounts left us of those governments which were in their infancy, and, of course in the least complicated state, to attempt to discover their foundation: he cannot fay therefore, that upon a very minute perusal of the excellent work before quoted, he has been fo far convinced, as to retract in the least from his sentiments on this head, and to give up maxims, which are drawn from historical facts, for those, which are the result of speculation. He may observe here, that whether government was a contract or not, it will not affect the reasoning of the present Essay: since where ever the contract is afterwards mentioned, it is inferred only that its object was "the happinels of the people," which is confessedly the end of government. Notwithstanding this, he is under the necessity of inserting this little note, though he almost feels himself ungrateful in contradicting a work, which has afforded him so much entertainment.

It appears, thirdly, that the grand object of the contract, is the happiness of the people; because they gave the supremacy to him alone, who had been conspicuous for the splendour of his abilities, or the integrity of his life: that the power of the multitude being directed by the wisdom and justice of the prince, they might experience the most effectual protection from injury, the highest advantages of society, the greatest possible happiness.

#### C H A P. IV.

Having now collected the materials that are necessary for the prosecution of our defign, we shall immediately enter upon the discussion.

If any man had originally been endued with power, as with other faculties, so that the rest of mankind had discovered in themselves an innate necessity of obeying this particular person; it is evident that he and his descendants, from the superiority of their nature, would have had a claim upon men for obedience, and a natural right to command: but as the right to empire is adventitious; as all were originally free; as nature made every man's body and mind his own; it is evident that no just man can be consigned to slavery, without his own consent.

Neither can men, by the same principles, be considered as lands, goods, or houses, among possessions. It is necessary that all property should be inferiour to its possession. But how does the save differ from his master, but by chance? For though the mark, with which the latter is pleased to brand him, shews, at the first sight, the difference of their fortune; what mark can be found in his nature, that can warrant a distinction?

To this confideration we shall add the following, that if men can justly become the property of each other, their children, like the offspring of cattle, must inherit their paternal lot. Now, as the actions of the father and the child must be thus at the sole disposal of their common master, it is evident, that the authority of the one,

one, as a parent, and the duty of the other, as a child, must be instantly annihilated; rights and obligations, which, as they are founded in nature, are implanted in our feelings, and are established by the voice of God, must contain in their annihilation a solid argument to prove, that there cannot be any property whatever in the buman species.

We may consider also, as a farther confirmation, that it is impossible, in the nature of things, that liberty can be bought or fold! It is neither saleable, nor purchasable. For if any one man can have an absolute property in the liberty of another, or, in other words, if he, who is called a master, can have a just right to command the actions of him, who is called a flave, it is evident that the latter cannot be accountable for those crimes, which the former may order him to commit. Now as every reasonable being is accountable for his actions, it is evident, that fuch a right cannot justly exist, and that human liberty, of course, is beyond the possibility either of sale or purchase. Add to this, that, whenever you fell the liberty of a man, you have the power only of alluding to the body: the mind cannot be confined or bound, it will be free, though its mansion be beset with chains. But if, in every sale of the human species, you are under the necessity of considering your slave in this abstracted light; of alluding only to the body, and of making no allusion to the mind; you are under the necessity also of treating him, in the same moment, as a brute, and of abufing therefore that nature, which cannot otherwise be considered, than in the double capacity of foul and body.

But some person, perhaps, will make an objection to one of the former arguments. "If men, from the su"periority of their nature, cannot be considered, like
"lands, goods, or houses, among possessions, so neither
"can cattle: for being endued with life, motion, and
"fensibility, they are evidently superiour to these."—
But this objection will receive its answer from those observations which have been already made; and will discover the true reason, why cattle are justly to be esti-

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mated as property. For first, the right to empire over brutes, is natural, and not adventitious, like the right to empire over men. There are, secondly, many and evident signs of the inferiority of their nature; and thirdly, their liberty can be bought and sold, because, being void of reason, they cannot be accountable for their actions.

We might stop here for a considerable time, and deduce many valuable lessons from the remarks that have been made, but that such a circumstance might be considered as a digression. There is one, however, which, as it is so intimately connected with the subject, we cannot but deduce. We are taught to treat men in a different manner from brutes, because they are so manifestly superiour in their nature; we are taught to treat brutes in a different manner from stones, for the same reason; and thus, by giving to every created thing its due respect, to answer the views of Providence, which did not create a variety of natures without a purpose or design.

But if these things are so, how evidently against reafon, nature, and every thing human and divine, must they act, who not only force men into flavery, against their own consent, but treat them altogether as brutes, and make the natural liberty of man an article of publick commerce! and by what arguments can they possibly defend that commerce, which cannot be carried on, in any single instance, without a slagrant violation of the

laws of nature and of God?

# CHAP. V.

That we may the more accurately examine the arguments that are advanced on this occasion, it will be proper to divide the commerce into two parts; first, as it relates to those who fell, and secondly, as it relates to those who purchase, the human species into slavery. To the former part of which, having given every previous and necessary information in the history of servitude, we shall immediately proceed.

Let us inquire first, by what particular right the liberties of the harmless people are invaded by the prince. "By the right of empire," it will be answered; "be"cause he possesses dominion and power by their own 
approbation and consent." But subjects, though under the dominion, are not the property, of the prince. They cannot be considered as his possesses. Their natures are both the same; they are both born in the same manner; are subject to the same disorders; must apply to the same remedies for a cure; are equally partakers of the grave: an incidental distinction accompanies them through life, and this —— is all.

We may add to this, that though the prince possesses

We may add to this, that though the prince possesses dominion and power, by the consent and approbation of his subjects, he possesses it only for the most falutary ends. He may tyrannize, if he can: he may alter the form of his government: he cannot, however, alter its nature and end. These will be immutably the same, though the whole system of its administration should be changed; and he will be still bound to defend the lives and properties of his subjects, and to make them

happy.

Does he defend those therefore, whom he invades at discretion with the sword? Does he protect the property of those, whose houses and effects he consigns at discretion to the flames? Does he make those happy, whom he feizes, as they are trying to escape the general devastation, and compels with their wives and families to a wretched fervitude? He acts surely, as if the use of empire confifted in violence and oppression; as if he, that was most exalted, ought, of necessity, to be most unjust. Here then the voice of nature and justice is against him. He breaks that law of nature, which ordains, st that no just man shall be given into slavery, against "his own consent:" he violates the first law of justice, as established among men, "that no person shall do harm to another without a previous and sufficient pro-" vocation;" and he violates also the sacred condition of empire, made with his ancestors, and necessarily understood in every species of government, "that, the power

" of the multitude being given up to the wisdom and "iustice of the prince, they may experience, in return, " the most effectual protection from injury, the high-" est advantages of society, the greatest possible happi-

But if kings then, to whom their own people have granted dominion and power, are unable to invade the liberties of their harmless subjects, without the highest injustice; how can those private persons be justified, who treacherously lie in wait for their fellow-creatures, and fell them into flavery? What arguments can they possibly bring in their defence? What treaty of empire can they produce, by which their innocent victims ever refigned to them the least portion of their liberty? In vain will they plead the antiquity of the custom: in vain will the bonourable light, in which piracy was considered in the ages of barbarism, afford them an excuse. Impious and abandoned men! ye invade the liberties of those, who, (with respect to your impious selves) are in a state of nature, in a state of original diffociation, perfectly independent, perfectly free.

It appears then, that the two orders of flaves, which have been mentioned in the history of the African servitude, " of those who are publickly seized by virtue of 66 the authority of their prince; and of those, who are " privately kidnapped by individuals," are collected by means of violence and oppression; by means, repugnant to nature, the principles of government, and the common notions of equity, as established among men.

#### C H A P. VI.

We come now to the third order of involuntary slaves, es to convicts." The only argument that the sellers advance here, is this, "that they have been found guilty "of offences, and that the punishment is just." But before the equity of the sentence can be allowed, two questions must be decided, whether the punishment is proportioned to the offence, and what is its particular objest and end?

To decide the first, we may previously observe, that the African servitude comprehends banishment, a depri-

vation of liberty, and many corporal fufferings.

On banishment, the following observations will suffice. Mankind have their local attachments. They have a particular regard for the spot, in which they were born and nurtured. Here it was, that they first drew their infant-breath: here, that they were cherished and supported: here, that they passed those scenes of childhood, which, free from care and anxiety, are the happiest in the life of man; scenes, which accompany them through which throw themselves frequently into their thoughts, and produce the most agreeable sensations. These then are weighty considerations; and how great this regard is, may be evidenced from our own feelings; from the testimony of some, who when remote from their country, and in the hour of danger and distress. have found their thoughts unusually directed, by some impulse or other, to their native spot; and from the example of others, who, having braved the storms and adversities of life, either repair to it for the remainder of their days, or defire even to be conveyed to it, when existence is no more.

But feparately from these their local, they have also their personal attachments; their regard for particular men. There are ties of blood; there are ties of friendship. In the former case, they must of necessity be attached: the constitution of their nature demands it. In the latter, it is impossible to be otherwise; since friendship is founded on an harmony of temper, on a concordance of sentiments and manners, on habits of considence, and a mutual exchange of savours.

We may now mention, as perfectly distinct both from their local and personal, the national attachments of mankind, their regard for the whole body of the people, among whom they were born and educated. This regard is particularly conspicuous in the conduct of such, as, being thus nationally connected, reside in foreign parts. How anxiously do they meet together! how much do they enjoy the sight of others of their countrymen,

whom

whom fortune places in their way! what an eagerness do they shew to serve them, though not born on the same particular spot, though not connected by consanguinity or friendship, though unknown to them before! Neither is this affection wonderful, since they are creatures of the same education; of the same principles; of the same manners and habits; cast, as it were, in the same mould; and marked with the same impression.

If men therefore are thus separately attached to the several objects described, it is evident that a separate exclusion from either must afford them considerable pain. What then must be their sufferings, to be forced for ever from their country, which includes them all? Which contains the spot, in which they were born and nurtured; which contains their relations and friends; which contains the whole body of the people, among whom they were bred and educated. In these sufferings, which arise to men, both in bidding, and in having bid, adieu to all that they esteem as dear and valuable, banishment consists in part; and we may agree therefore with the ancients, without adding other melancholy circumstances to the account, that it is no inconsiderable punishment of itself.

With respect to the loss of liberty, which is the second consideration in the punishment, it is evident that men bear nothing worse; that there is nothing, that they lay more at heart; and that they have shewn, by many and memorable instances, that even death is to be preferred. How many could be named here, who, having suffered the loss of liberty, have put a period to their existence! How many, that have willingly undergone the hazard of their lives to destroy a tyrant! How many, that have even gloried to perish in the attempt! How many bloody and publick wars have been undertaken (not to mention the numerous servile insurrections, with which history is stained) for the cause of freedom!

But if nothing is dearer than liberty to men, with which, the barren rock is able to afford its joys, and without which, the glorious fun shines upon then but in vain, and all the sweets and delicacies of life are taste-

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less and unenjoyed; what punishment can be more severe than the loss of so great a blessing? But if to this deprivation of liberty, we add the agonizing pangs of banishment; and if to the complicated stings of both, we add the incessant stripes, wounds, and miseries, which are undergone by those, who are sold into this horrid servitude; what crime can we possibly imagine to be so enormous, as to be worthy of so great a punishment?

How contrary then to reason, justice, and nature, must those act, who apply this, the severest of human punishments, to the most insignificant offence! yet such is the custom with the Africans: for, from the time, in which the Europeans first intoxicated the African princes with their foreign draughts, no crime has been committed, no shadow of a crime devised, that has not im-

mediately been punished with servitude.

But for what purpose is the punishment applied? Is it applied to amend the manners of the criminal, and thus render him a better subject? No, for if you banish him, he can no longer be a subject, and you can no longer therefore be solicitous for his morals. Add to this, that if you banish him to a place, where he is to experience the hardships of want and hunger (so powerfully does hunger compel men to the perpetration of crimes) you force him rather to corrupt, than amend his manners, and to be wicked, when he might otherwise be just.

Is it applied then, that others may be deterred from the same proceedings, and that crimes may become less frequent? No, but that avarice may be gratified; that the prince may experience the emoluments of the sale: for, horrid and melancholy thought! the more crimes his subjects commit, the richer is he made; the more abandoned the subject, the bappier is the prince!

Neither can we allow that the punishment thus applied, tends in any degree to answer the publick happines; for if men can be sentenced to slavery, right or wrong; if shadows can be turned into substances, and virtues into

crimes; it is evident that none can be happy, because none can be secure.

But if the punishment is infinitely greater than the offence, (which has been shewn before) and if it is inflicted, neither to amend the criminal, nor to deter others from the same proceedings, nor to advance, in any degree, the happiness of the publick, it is scarce necessary to observe, that it is totally unjust, since it is repugnant to reason, the dictates of nature, and the very principles of government.

#### C H A P. VII.

We come now to the fourth and last order of slaves, to prisoners of war. As the sellers lay a particular stress on this order of men, and infer much, from its antiquity, in support of the justice of their cause, we shall examine the principle, on which it subsisted among the ancients. But as this principle was the same among all nations, and as a citation from many of their histories would not be less tedious than unnecessary, we shall select the example of the Romans for the consideration of the case.

The law, by which prisoners of war were said to be sentenced to servitude, was the \* law of nations, It was so called from the universal concurrence of nations in the custom. It had two points in view, the persons of the captured, and their effects; both of which it immediately sentenced, without any of the usual forms of law, to

be the property of the captors.

The principle, on which the law was established, was the right of capture. When any of the contending parties had overcome their opponents, and were about to destroy them, the right was considered to commence; a right, which the victors conceived themselves to have, to recal their swords, and, from the consideration of having saved the lives of the vanquished, when they could have taken them by the laws of war, to commute

<sup>\*</sup> Jure Gentium servi nostri sunt, qui ab hossibus capiuntur. Justinian. L. 1. 5. 5. 1.

blood for fervice. Hence the Roman lawyer, Pomponius, deduces the etymology of flave in the Roman language.

"They were called fervi, says he, from the following circumstance. It was usual with our commandcers to take them prisoners and sell them: now this
circumstance implies, that they must have been previously preserved, and hence the name." Such then
was the right of capture. It was a right, which the circumstance of taking the vanquished, that is, of preserving them alive, gave the conquerors to their persons. By this right as always including the idea of a previous preservation from death, † the vanquished were said to be flaves; and, "as all slaves," says Justinian, "are themselves in the power of others, and of course can have nothing of their own, so their effects followed the condition of their persons, and became the property of the captors."

To examine this right, by which the vanquished were said to be slaves, we shall use the words of a celebrated Roman author, and apply them to the present case. ‡ "If it is lawful," says he, "to deprive a man of his "life, it is certainly not inconsistent with nature to rob him;" to rob him of his liberty. We admit the conclusion to be just, if the supposition be the same: we allow, if men have a right to commit that, which is considered as a greater crime, that they have a right, at the same instant, to commit that, which is considered as a less. But what shall we say to the hypothesis? We deny it to be true. The voice of nature is against it. It is not lawful to kill, but on necessity. Had there been a necessity, where had the wretched captive survived to be broken with chains and servitude? The very act of saving his life is an argument to prove, that no such necessity existed. The conclusion

† Nam sive victoribus jure captivitatis servissent, &c. Justin, L. 4.

3. et passim apud scriptores antiquos.

<sup>\*</sup>Servorum appellatio ex eo fluxit, quod imperatores nostri captivos vendere, ac per hoc servare, nec occidere solent.

<sup>†</sup> Neque est contra naturum spoliare eum, si possis, quem hone-stum est necare. Ciccro de officiis L. 3. 6.

is therefore false. The captors had no right to the lives of the captured, and of course none to their liberty: they had no right to their blood, and of course none to their service. Their right therefore had no foundation in justice. It was founded on a principle, contrary to the law of nature, and of course contrary to that law, which people, under different governments, are bound to observe to one another.

It is scarce necessary to observe, as a farther testimony of the injustice of the measure, that the Europeans, after the introduction of Christianity, exploded this principle of the ancients, as frivolous and false; that they spared the lives of the vanquished, not from the sordid motives of avarice, but from a conscientiousness, that homicide could only be justified by necessity; that they introduced an exchange of prisoners, and, by many and wise regulations, deprived war of many of its former-horrours.

But the advocates for flavery, unable to defend themfelves against these arguments, have fled to other resources, and, ignorant of history, have denied that the
right of capture was the true principle, on which slavery
subsisted among the ancients. They reason thus. "The
learned Grotius, and others, have considered slavery as
the just consequence of a private war, (supposing the
war to be just and the opponents in a state of nature,)
upon the principles of reparation and punishment. Now
as the law of nature, which is the rule of conduct to
individuals in such a situation, is applicable to members
of a different community, there is reason to presume,
that these principles were applied by the ancients to their
prisoners of war; that their effects were consisted by
the right of reparation, and their persons by the right of
punishment."

But such a presumption is false. The right of capture was the only argument, that the ancients adduced in their defence. Hence Polybius; "What must they, the Mantinenses suffer, to receive the punishment they deserve? Perhaps it will be said, that they must be fold, when they are taken, with their wives and children

"children into flavery: But this is not to be confidered as a punishment, since even those suffer it, by the laws of war, who have done nothing that is base." The truth is, that both the offending and the offended parties, whenever they were victorious, inflicted slavery alike. But if the offending party inflicted slavery on the persons of the vanquished, by what right did they inflict it? It must be answered from the presumption before-mentioned, "by the right of reparation or of punishment:" an answer plainly absurd and contradictory, as it supposes the agressor to have a right, which the injured only could posses.

Neither is the argument less fallacious than the prefumption, in applying these principles, which in a publick war could belong to the publick only, to the persons of the individuals that were taken. This calls us again to the history of the ancients, and, as the rights of reparation and punishment could extend to those only, who had been injured, to select a particular instance for the

confideration of the case.

As the Romans had been injured without a previous provocation by the conduct of Hannibal at Saguntum, we may take the treaty into confideration, which they made with the Carthaginians, when the latter, defeated at Zama, sued for peace. It confisted of three articles. \* By the first, the Carthaginians were to be free, and to enjoy their own constitution and laws. By the second, they were to pay a considerable sum of money, as a reparation for the damages and expence of the war: and, by the third, they were to deliver up their elephants and ships of war, and to be subject to various restrictions, as a punishment. With these terms they complied, and the war was finished.

Thus

\* 1. Ut liberi fuis legibus viverent. Livy, L. 30. 37.

2. Decem millia talentum argenti descripta pensionibus asquis in

annos quinquaginta folverent. Ibid.

<sup>3.</sup> Et naves rostratas, præter decem triremes, traderent, elephantosque, quos haberent domitos; neque domarent alios: Bellum neve
in Africa, neve extra Africam, injustu P. R. gererent, &c. Lbid.

Thus then did the Romans make that distinction between private and publick war, which was necessary to be made, and which the argument is fallacious in not supposing. The treasury of the vanquished was marked as the means of reparation; and as this treasury was supplied, in a great measure, by the imposition of taxes, and was, wholly, the property of the publick, so the publick made the reparation that was due. The elephants also, and ships of war, which were marked as the means of punishment, were publick property; and as they were confiderable instruments of security and defence to their possessors, and of annoyance to an enemy, so their loss, added to the restrictions of the treaty, operated as a great and publick punishment. But with respect to the Carthaginian prisoners, who had been taken in the war, they were retained in fervitude: not upon the principles of reparation and punishment, because the Romans had already received, by their own confession in the treaty, a sufficient fatisfaction: not upon these principles, because they were inapplicable to individuals: the legionary foldier in the service of the injured, who took his prisoner, was not the person, to whom the injury had been done, any more than the foldier in the service of the aggressors, who was taken, was the person, who had committed the offence: but they were retained in servitude by the right of capture; because, when both parties had sent their military into the field to determine the dispute, it was at the private choice of the legionary foldier before-mentioned. whether he would spare the life of his conquered opponent, when he was thought to be entitled to take it, it he had chosen, by the laws of war.

To produce more instances, as an illustration of the subject, or to go farther into the argument, would be to trespass upon the patience, as well as understanding of the reader. In a state of nature, where a man is supposed to commit an injury, and to be unconnected with the rest of the world, the act is private, and the right, which the injured acquires, can extend only to bimself: but in a state of society, where any member or members of a particular community give offence to those

of another, and they are patronized by the state. to which they belong, the case is altered; the act becomes immediately publick, and the publick alone are to experience the consequences of their injustice. For as no particular member of the community, if confidered as an individual, is guilty, except the person, by whom the injury was done, it would be contrary to reason and justice, to apply the principles of reparation and punishment, which belong to the people as a collective body. to any individual of the community, who should happen to be taken. Now, as the principles of reparation and punishment are thus inapplicable to the prisoners, taken in a publick war, and as the right of capture, as we have shewn before, is insufficient to intitle the victors to the fervice of the vanquished, it is evident that slavery cannot justly exist at all, since there are no other maxims, on which it can be founded, even in the most equitable wars.

But if these things are so; if slavery cannot be defended even in the most equitable wars, what arguments will not be found against that servitude which arises from those, that are unjust? Which arises from those African wars, that relate to the present subject? The African princes, corrupted by the merchants of Europe, feek every opportunity of quarrelling with one another-Every spark is blown into a slame; and war is undertaken from no other confideration, than that of procuring flaves: while the Europeans, on the other hand, happy in the quarrels which they have thus excited, supply them with arms and ammunition for the accomplishment of their horrid purpole. Thus has Africa, for the space of two hundred years, been the scene of the most iniquitous and bloody wars; and thus have many thousands of men, in the most iniquitous manner, been sent into servitude,

### C H A P. VIII.

We shall beg leave, before we proceed to the arguments of the purchasers, to add the following observations to the substance of the three preceding chapters.

As the two orders of men, of those who are privately kidnapped by individuals, and of those who are publickly seized by virtue of the authority of their prince, compose together, at least, \* nine tenths of the African slaves, they cannot contain, upon a moderate computation, less than ninety thousand men annually transported: an immense number, but easily to be credited, when we reslect that thousands are employed for the purpose of stealing the unwary, and that these diabolical practices are in force, so far has European injustice been spread, at the distance of a thousand miles from the factories

\* The total annual exportation from Africa, is estimated here at 100,000 men, two thirds of whom are exported by the British merchants alone. This estimate is less than that which is usually made, and has been published. The author has been informed by disinterested people, who were in most of the West India islands during the late war, and who conversed with many of the most intelligent of the negroes, for the purpose of inquiring by what methods they had originally been reduced to flavery, that they did not find even two in twenty, who had been reduced to that situation, by any other means than those mentioned above. The author, desirous of a farther confirmation of this circumflance, stopped the press till he had written to another friend, who had resided twenty years in the West-Indies, and whose opinion he had not yet asked. The following is an extract from the answer. "I do not among many hundreds re-" collect to have seen but one or two slaves, of those imported "from Africa, who had any scars to shew, that they had been in "war. They are generally fuch as are kidnapped, or fold by their "tyrants, after the destruction of a village. In short, I am firmly " of opinion, that crimes and war together do not furnish one slave " in an hundred of the numbers introduced into the European colo-" nies. Of consequence the trade itself, were it possible to sup-" pose convicts or prisoners of war to be justly sentenced to servitude, is accountable for ninety-nine in every hundred slaves whom " it supplies. It is an insult to the publick, to attempt to palliate " the method of procuring them."

tories on the coast. The flave merchants, among whom a quantity of European goods is previously divided, travel into the heart of the country to this amazing distance. Some of them attend the various markets, that are established through so large an extent of territory, to purchase the kidnapped people, whom the flave-bunters are continully bringing in; while the rest, subdividing their merchandize among the petty sovereigns with whom they deal, receive, by an immediate exertion of fraud and violence, the stipulated number.

Now, will any man affert, in opposition to the arguments before advanced, that out of this immense body of men, thus annually collected and transported, there is even one, over whom the original or subsequent seller can have any power or right? Whoever afferts this, in the first instance, must contradict his own seelings, and must consider bimself as a just object of prey, whenever any daring invader shall think it proper to attack bim. And, in the second instance, the very idea which the African princes entertain of their villages, as parks or reservoirs, stocked only for their own convenience, and of their subjects, as wild beasts, whom they may pursue and take at pleasure, is so shocking, that it need only be mentioned, to be instantly reprobated by the reader.

The order of slaves, which is next to the former in respect to the number of people whom it contains, is that of prisoners of war. This order, if the former statement be true, is more inconsiderable than is generally imagined; but whoever reslects on the prodigious slaughter that is constantly made in every African skirmish, cannot be otherwise than of this opinion: he will find, that where ten are taken, he has every reason to presume that an hundred perish. In some of these skirmishes, though they have been begun for the express purpose of procuring slaves, the conquerors have suffered but sew of the vanquished to escape the sury of the sword; and there have not been wanting instances, where they have been so incensed at the resistance they have found, that their spirit of vengeance has entirely got the better

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of their avarice, and they have murdered, in cool blood, every individual, without discrimination, either of age or sex.

\* The following is an account of one of these skirmishes, as described by a person, who was witness to the scene. "I was fent, with several others, in a small 66 floop up the river Niger, to purchase slaves: we had " fome free negroes with us in the practice; and as the " veffels are liable to frequent attacks from the negroes " on one fide of the river, or the Moors on the other, they " are all armed. As we rode at anchor a long way up "the river, we observed a large number of negroes in thuts by the river's fide, and for our own fafety kept wary eye on them. Early next morning we faw from our mast head a numerous body approaching, with apparently but little order, but in close array. "They approached very fast, and fell furiously on the " inhabitants of the town, who feemed to be quite " furprized, but nevertheless, as soon as they could get " together, fought stoutly. They had some fire-arms, " but made very little use of them, as they came directly " to close fighting with their spears, lances, and sabres. "Many of the invaders were mounted on small horses; s and both parties fought for about half an hour with "the fiercest animosity, exerting much more courage and perseverance than I had ever before been witness " to amongst them. The women and children of the " town clustered together to the water's edge, running " shricking up and down with terrour, waiting the event

<sup>\*</sup> The writer of the letter of which this is a faithful extract, and who was known to the author of the present Essay, was a long time on the African coast. He had once the missortune to be shipwrecked there, and to be taken by the natives, who conveyed him and his companions a considerable way up into the country. The hardships which he underwent in the march, his treatment during his captivity, the scenes to which he was witness, while he resided among the inland Africans, as well as while in the African trade, gave occasion to a series of very interesting letters. These letters were sent to the author of the present Essay, with liberty to make what use of them he chose, by the gentleman to whom they were written.

of the combat, till their party gave way and took to " the water, to endeavour to swim over to the Barbary " fide. They were closely purfued even into the river 66 by the victors, who, though they came for the pur-" pose of getting flaves, gave no quarter, their cruelty " even prevailing over their avarice. They made no prifoners, but put all to the fword without mercy. " rible indeed was the carnage of the vanquished on " this occasion, and as we were within two or three " hundred yards of them, their cries and shrieks affect-" ed us extremely. We had got up our anchor at the " beginning of the fray, and now stood close in to the fpot, where the victors having followed the vanquished into the water, were continually dragging out and " murdering those, whom by reason of their wounds "they easily overtook. The very children, whom they "took in great numbers, did not escape the massacre. " Enraged at their barbarity, we fired our guns loaden with grape-shot, and a volley of small arms among "them, which effectually checked their ardour, and 66 obliged them to retire to a distance from the shore; "from whence a few round cannon shot foon removed 46 them into the woods. The whole river was black over with the heads of the fugitives, who were fwimes ming for their lives. These poor wretches, fearing " us as much as their conquerors, dived when we fired, " and cried most lamentably for mercy. Having now " effectually favoured their retreat, we stood back-" wards and forwards, and took up feveral that were "wounded and tired. All whose wounds had disabled them from swimming, were either butchered or " drowned, before we got up to them. With a justice " and generofity, never I believe before heard of among " flavers, we gave those their liberty whom we had " taken up, fetting them on shore on the Barbary side, 44 among the poor residue of their companions, who " had furvived the flaughter of the morning."

We shall make but two remarks on this horrid instance of African cruelty. It adds, first, a considerable weight to the statements that have been made; and confirms, secondly, the conclusions that were drawn in the preceding chapter. For if we even allow the right of capture to be just and the principles of reparation and punishment to be applicable to the individuals of a community, yet would the former be unjust, and the latter inapplicable, in the present case. Every African war is a robbery; and we may add, to our former expression, when we said, "that thus have many thou-" sands of men, in the most iniquitous manner, been fent into servitude," that we believe there are few of this order, who are not as much the examples of injustice, as the people that have been kidnapped; and who do not additionally convey, when we consider them as prisoners of war, an idea of the most complicated scene of murder.

The order of convicts, as it exists almost solely among those princes, whose dominions are contigious to the European factories, is from this circumstance so inconsiderable, when compared with either of the preceding, that we should not have mentioned it again, but that we were unwilling to omit any additional argument that occured against it.

It has been shewn already, that the punishment of slavery is inslicted from no other motive, than that of gratifying the adarice of the prince, a consideration so detestable, as to be sufficient of itself to prove it to be unjust; and that it is so disproportionate, from its nature, to the offence, as to afford an additional proof of its injustice. We shall add now, as a second argument, its disproportion from its continuance: and we shall derive a third from the consideration, that, in civil society, every violation of the laws of the community is an offence against the state. \*

Let us suppose then an African prince, disdaining for once the idea of emolument: let us suppose him for once instanced

<sup>\*</sup> Were this not the case, the government of a .country could have no right to take cognizance of crimes, and punish them, but every individual, if injured, would have a right to punish the aggression with his own hand, which is contrary to the notions of all civilized men, whether among the ancients or the moderns.

inflamed with the love of his country, and resolving to punish from this principle alone, " that by exhibiting an example of terrour, he may preserve that happiness of "the publick, which he is bound to secure and defend by the very nature of his contract; or, in other words, "that he may answer the end of government." If actuated then by this principle, he should adjudge slavery to an offender, as a just punishment for his offence, for whose benefit must the convict labour? If it be answered, " for the benefit of the state," we allow that the punishment, in whatever light it is considered, will be found to be equitable: but if it be answered, " for the benefit of any individual whom he pleases to appoint," we deny it to be just. The \* state alone is considered to have been injured, and as injuries cannot possibly be transferred, the state alone can justly recieve the advantages of his labour. But if the African prince, when he thus condemns him to labour for the benefit of an unoffended individual, should at the same time sentence him to become his property: that is, if he should make the person and life of the convict at the absolute disposal of him, for whom he has fentenced him to labour; it is evident that, in addition to his former injustice, he is usurping a power, which no ruler or rulers of a state can possess, and which the great Creator of the universe never yet gave to any order whatever of created beings.

That this reasoning is true, and that civilized nations have considered it as such, will be best testified by their practice. We may appeal here to that slavery, which is now adjudged to delinquents, as a punishment, among many of the states of Europe. These delinquents are sentenced to labour at the oar, to work in mines, and on sortifications, to cut and clear rivers, to make and repair roads, and to perform other works of national utility. They are employed, in short, in the publick work; because.

<sup>\*</sup> This same notion is entertained even by the African princes, who do not permit the person injured to revenge his injury, or to receive the convict as his slave. But if the very person who has been injured, does not possess him, much less ought any other person whatsoever.

cause, as the crimes they have committed are considered to have been crimes against the publick, no individual can justly receive the emoluments of their labour; and they are neither fold, nor made capable of being transferred, because no government whatsoever is invested with such a power.

Thus then may that flavery, in which only the idea of labour is included, be perfectly equitable, and the de-linquent will always receive his punishment as a man; whereas in that, which additionally includes the idea of property, and to undergo which, the delinquent must, previously change his nature, and become a brute, there is an inconfiftency, which no arguments can reconcile, and a contradiction to every principle of nature, which a man need only to appeal to his own feelings immediately to evince. And we will venture to affert, from the united observations that have been made upon the fubject, in opposition to any arguments that may be advanced, that there is scarcely one of those, who are called African convicts, on whom the prince has a right to inflict a punishment at all; and that there is no one whatever, whom he has a power of fentencing to labour for the benefit of an unoffended individual, and much less whom he has a right to fell.

\* Having now fully examined the arguments of the fellers, and having made such additional remarks as were necessary, we have only to add, that we cannot sufficiently express our detestation at their conduct. Were the reader coolly to reslect upon the case of but one of the unfortunate men, who are annually the victims of avarice, and consider his situation in life, as a father, an husband, or a friend, we are sure, that even on such a partial reslection, he must experience considerable pain. What then must be his feelings, when he is told, that,

<sup>\*</sup> There are instances on the African continent, of parents selling their children. As the slaves of this description are so sew, and are so irregularly obtained, we did not think it worth our while to consider them as forming an order; and, as God never gave the parent a power over his child to make him miserable, we trust that any farther mention of them will be unnecessary.

fince the flave-trade began, † nine millions of men have been torn from their dearest connections, and sold into flavery. If at this recital his indignation should arise, let him consider it as the genuine production of nature; that she recoiled at the horrid thought, and that she applied instantly a torch to his breast to kindle his resentment; and if, during his indignation, she should awaken the sigh of sympathy, or seduce the tear of commiseration from his eye, let him consider each as an additional argument against the iniquity of the sellers.

### C H A P. IX.

It remains only now, to examine by what arguments those, who receive or purchase their fellow-ceatures into slavery, defend the commerce. Their first plea is, "that "they receive those with propriety, who are convicted "of crimes, because they are delivered into their hands by their own magistrates." But what is this to you receivers? Have the unfortunate convicts been guilty of injury to you? Have they broken your treaties? Have they plundered your ships? Have they carried your wives and children into slavery, that you should thus retaliate? Have they offended you even by word or gesture?

But if the African convicts are innocent with respect to you; if you have not even the shadow of a claim upon their persons; by what right do you receive them? "By the laws of the Africans," you will say; "by which it is positively allowed."—But can laws alter the nature of vice? They may give it a sanction perhaps: it will still be immutably the same, and, though dressed in the outward habiliments of bonour, will still be intrin-

fically base.

But alas! you do not only attempt to defend yourfelves by these arguments, but even dare to give your
actions the appearance of lenity, and assume merit from
your baseness! and how first ought you particularly to
blush, when you affert, "that prisoners of war are only
"purchased from the hands of their conquerors, to de"liver them from death." Ridiculous defence! can the
most

<sup>†</sup> Abbe Raynal, Hist. Phil. vol. 4. P. 154.

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most credulous believe it? You entice the Africans to war; you foment their quarrels; you supply them with arms and ammunition, and all-from the motives of benevolence. Does a man fet fire to an house, for the purpose of rescuing the inhabitants from the slames? But if they are only purchased, to deliver them from death; why, when they are delivered into your hand, as protectors, do you torture them with hunger? Why do you kill them with fatigue? Why does the whip deform their bodies, or the knife their limbs? Why do you fentence them to death? to a death, infinitely more excruciating than that from which you so kindly saved them? What answer do you make to this? for if you had not humanely preserved them from the hands of their conquerors, a quick death perhaps, and that in the space of a moment, had freed them from their pain: but on account of your favour and benevolence, it is known, that they have lingered years in pain and agony, and have been sentenced, at last, to a dreadful death for the most infignificant offence.

Neither can we allow the other argument to be true, on which you found your merit; " that you take them 66 from their country for their own convenience; because Africa, scorched with incessant heat, and sub-iect to the most violent rains and tempests, is unwhole-" some, and unfit to be inhabited." Preposterous men! do you thus judge from your own feelings? Do you thus judge from your own constitution and frame? But if you furpose that the Africans are incapable of enduring their own climate, because you cannot endure it yourselves; why do you receive them into flavery? Why do you not measure them here by the same standard? For if you are unable to bear hunger and thirst, chains and imprifonment, wounds and torture, why do you not suppose them incapable of enduring the same treatment? Thus then is your argument turned against yourselves. consider the answer which the Scythians gave the Ægypti-- ans, when they contended about the antiquity of their original, \* " That nature, when she first distinguished " countries

countries by different degrees of heat and cold, tempered the bodies of animals, at the same instant, to

endure the different fituations: that as the climate of

"Scythia was severer than that of Ægypt, so were the bodies of the Scythians harder, and as capable of en-

" during the severity of their atmosphere, as the Ægyp-

"tians the temperateness of their own."

But you may fay perhaps, that, though they are capable of enduring their own climate, yet their fituation is frequently uncomfortable, and even wretched: that Africa is infested with locusts, and infects of various kinds; that they fettle in fwarms upon the trees, destroy the verdure, confume the fruit, and deprive the inhabitants of their food. But the same answer may be applied as before; "that the same kind Providence, who tempered the body of the animal, tempered also the body of the tree; that he gave it a quality to recover the bite of the locust, which he sent; and to reassume, in a short interval of time, its former glory." And that such is the case experience has shewn: for the very trees that have been intefted, and stripped of their bloom and verdure, so surprizingly quick is vegetation, appear in a few days, as if an insect had been utterly unknown.

We may add to these observations, from the testimony of those who have written the History of Africa from their own inspection, that no country is more luxurious in prospects, none more fruitful, none more rich in herds and flocks, and none, where the comforts of life can be

gained with fo little trouble.

But you say again, as a confirmation of these your former arguments, (by which you would have it understood, that the Africans themselves are sensible of the goodness of your intentions) "that they do not appear "to go with you against their will." Impudent and base affertion! Why then do you load them with chains? Why keep you your daily and nightly watches? But alas, as a farther, though a more melancholy proof, of the salfehood of your affertions, how many, when on board your ships, have put a period to their existence? How many have leaped into the sea? How many have pined

pined to death, that, even at the expence of their lives,

they might fly from your benevolence?

Do you call them obstinate then, because they refuse your favours? Do you call them ungrateful, because they make you this return? How much rather ought you receivers to blush! How much rather ought you receivers to be considered as abandoned and execrable; who, when you usure the dominion over those, who are as free and independant as yourselves, break the first law of justice, which ordains, "that no person shall do "harm to another, without a previous provocation;" who offend against the dictates of nature, which commands, "that no just man shall be given or received "into slavery against his own consent;" and who violate the very laws of the empire that you assume, by consigning your subjects to misery.

Now, as a famous Heathen philosopher observes, from whose mouth you shall be convicted, \* " there is a con"fiderable difference, whether an injury is done, during
"any perturbation of mind, which is generally short
and momentary; or whether it is done with any pre"vious meditation and design; for, those crimes, which
proceed from any sudden commotion of the mind,
"are less than those, which are studied and prepared,"
how great and enormous are your crimes to be considered, who plan your African voyages at a time, when
your reason is sound, and your senses are awake; who
coolly and deliberately equip your vessels; and who spend
years, and even lives, in the traffick of buman liberty.

But if the arguments of those, who fell or deliver men into slavery, (as we have shewn before) and of those, who receive or purchase them, (as we have now shewn) are wholly false; it is evident that this commerce, is not only beyond the possibility of defence, but is justly to be accounted wicked, and justly impious, since it is contrary to the principles of law and government, the dictates of reason, the common maxims of equity, the laws of nature, the admonitions of conscience, and, in short, the whole doctrine of natural religion.

PART

<sup>\*</sup> Cicero de Officiis. L. 1. C. 8.



#### PART III.

#### THE

# SLAVERY OF THE AFRICANS

IN THE

# EUROPEAN COLONIES.

# C H A P. I.

part of this Essay, to the consideration of the commerce, we shall now proceed to the consideration of the someway that is founded upon it. As this slavery will be conspicuous in the treatment, which the unfortunate Africans uniformly undergo, when they are put into the hands of the receivers, we shall describe the manner in which they are accustomed to be used from this period.

To place this in the clearest, and most conspicuous point of view, we shall throw a considerable part of our information on this head into the form of a narrative: we shall suppose ourselves, in short, on the continent of Africa, and relate a scene, which, from its agreement with unquestionable sacts, might not unreasonably be presumed to have been presented to our view, had we

been really there.

And first, let us turn our eyes to the cloud of dust that is before us. It seems to advance rapidly, and, accompanied with dismal shrieks and yellings, to make the very air, that is above it, tremble as it rolls along. What can possibly be the cause? Let us inquire of that

Ř2

melancholy African, who feems to walk dejected near the shore; whose eyes are stedfastly fixed on the approaching object, and whose heart, if we can judge from the appearance of his countenance, must be greatly agitated.

"Alas!" fays the unhappy African, "the cloud " that you see approaching, is a train of wretched slaves. 66 They are going to the ships behind you. They are " destined for the English colonies, and, if you will " stay here but for a little time, you will see them pass. "They were last night drawn up upon the plain which "you see before you, where they were branded upon the breast with an hot iron; and when they had un-"dergone the whole of the treatment which is custom-" ary on these occasions, and which I am informed that you Englishmen at home use to the cattle which " you buy, they were returned to their prison. As I " have some dealings with the members of the factory " which you see at a little distance, (though thanks to "the Great Spirit, I never dealt in the liberty of my fellow creatures) I gained admittance there. I learned the history of some of the unfortunate people, whom I saw confined, and will explain to you, if my eye should catch them as they pass, the real causes of " their servitude."

Scarcely were these words spoken, when they came distinctly into sight. They appeared to advance in a long column, but in a very irregular manner. There were three only in the front, and these were chained together. The rest that followed seemed to be chained by pairs, but by pressing forward, to avoid the lash of the drivers, the breadth of the column began to be greatly extended, and ten or more were observed abreast.

While we were making these remarks, the intelligent African thus resumed his discourse. "The first three whom you observe, at the head of the train, to be chained together, are prisoners of war. As soon as the ships that are behind you arrived, the news was dispatched into the inland country; when one of the petty

"e petty kings immediately affembled his subjects, and attacked a neighbouring tribe. The wretched people, though they were surprized, made a formidable resistance, as they resolved, almost all of them, rather to lose their lives, than survive their liberty. The person whom you see in the middle, is the father of the two young men, who are chained to him on each side. His wise and two of his children were killed in the attack, and his father being wounded, and, on account of his age, incapable of servitude, was lest bleeding on the spot where this transaction happened."

With respect to those who are now passing us, and " are immediately behind the former, I can give you " no other intelligence, than that fome of them, to 46 about the number of thirty, were taken in the same 46 skirmish. Their tribe was said to have been numerous 66 before the attack; these however are all that are left alive. 66 But with respect to the unhappy man, who is now opposite to us, and whom you may distinguish, as he is now looking back and wringing his hands in de-66 spair, I can inform you with more precision. He is " an unfortunate convict. He lived only about five days journey from the factory. He went out with 66 his king to hunt, and was one of his train; but, 66 through too great an anxiety to afford his royal ma-" ster diversion, he roused the game from the covert " rather fooner than was expected. The king, exaf-66 perated at this circumstance, immediately sentenced him 66 to flavery. His wife and children, fearing left the tyrant " should extend the punishment to themselves, which is or not unufual, fled directly to the woods, where they were " all devoured."

"The people, whom you see close behind the unhappy convict, form a numerous body, and reach a
considerable way. They speak a language, which no
person in this part of Africa can understand, and their
features, as you perceive, are so different from those
of the rest, that they almost appear a distinct race of
men. From this circumstance I recollect them. They

" are the subjects of a very distant prince, who agreed " with the flave merchants, for a quantity of spirituous 66 liquors, to furnish him with a stipulated number of "flaves. He accordingly furrounded, and fet fire to one of his own villages in the night, and feized these 46 people, who were unfortunately the inhabitants, as they were escaping from the flames. I first saw them 46 as the merchants were driving them in, about two "days ago. They came in a large body, and were tied together at the neck with leather thongs, which " permitted them to walk at the distance of about a "yard from one another. Many of them were loaden with elephants teeth, which had been purchased at the " same time. All of them had bags, made of skin, " upon their shoulders; for as they were to travel, in "their way from the great mountains, through barren fands and inhospitable woods for many days together, "they were obliged to carry water and provisions with them. Notwithstanding this, many of them perished, " fome by hunger, but the greatest number by fatigue, es as the place from whence they came, is at fuch an " amazing distance from this, and the obstacles, from " the nature of the country, fo great, that the journey " could fearcely be completed in feven moons."

When this relation was finished, and we had been looking stedfastly for some time on the croud that was going by, we lost fight of that peculiarity of feature, which we had before remarked. We then discovered that the inhabitants of the depopulated village had all of them passed us, and that the part of the train, to which we were now opposite, was a numerous body of kidnapped people. Here we indulged our imagination. We thought we beheld in one of them a father, in another an husband, and in another a fon, each of whom was forced from his various and tender connections, and without even the opportunity of bidding them adieu. While we were engaged in these and other melancholy reflections, the whole body of flaves had entirely paffed us. We turned almost insensibly to look at them again, when we discovered an unhappy man at the end of the

train, who could scarcely keep pace with the rest. His feet feemed to have fuffered much from long and constant travelling, for he was limping painfully along.

"This man, resumes the African, has travelled a considerable way. He lived at a great distance from "hence, and had a large family, for whom he was dai-" ly to provide. As he went out one night to a neigh-" bouring spring, to procure water for his thirsty chil-" dren, he was kidnapped by two flave hunters, who " fold him in the morning to some country merchants " for a bar of iron. These drove him with other slaves, " procured almost in the same manner, to the nearest " market, where the English merchants, to whom the "train that has just now passed us belongs, purchased him and two others, by means of their travelling "agents, for a piftol. His wife and children have been " long waiting for his return. But he is gone for ever " from their fight: and they must be now disconsolate, " as they must be certain by his delay, that he has fal-" len into the hands of the Christians.

"And now, as I have mentioned the name of Chri-" fians, a name, by which the Europeans distinguish "themselves from us, I could wish to be informed of " the meaning which fuch an appellation may convey. "They confider themselves as men, but us unfortunate " Africans, whom they term Heathers, as the beasts that " ferve us. But ah! how different is the fact! What is " Christianity, but a system of murder and oppression? "The cries and yells of the unfortunate people, who " are now foon to embark for the regions of servitude, " have already pierced my heart. Have you not heard me figh, while we have been talking? Do you not fee " the tears that now trickle down my cheeks? and yet " these hardened Christians are unable to be moved at " all: nay, they will fcourge them amidst their groans, " and even smile, while they are torturing them to death, " Happy, happy Heathenism! which can detest the vices " of Christianity, and feel for the distresses of man-" kind."

. " But" we reply, " You are totally mistaken: Chris-" tianity is the most perfect and lovely of moral systems. "It bleffes even the hand of perfecution itself, and re-5 turns good for evil. But the people against whom wou so justly declaim, are not Christians. They are " infidels. They are monsters. They are out of the common course of nature. Their countrymen at home are generous and brave. They support the fick, the " lame, and the blind. They fly to the succour of the "diffressed. They have noble and stately buildings for the fole purpose of benevolence. They are in short, of all nations, the most remarkable for humanity and " justice."

"But why then," replies the honest African, "do they suffer this? Why is Africa a scene of blood and "defolation? Why are her children wrested from her, so to administer to the luxuries and greatness of those "whom they never offended? And why are these dis-

" mal cries in vain?"

"Alas!" we reply again, "can the cries and groans, with which the air now trembles, be heared across this extensive continent? Can the southern winds convey "them to the ear of Britain? If they could reach the se generous Englishman at home, they would pierce his heart, as they have already pierced your own. He "would fympathize with you in your distress. He would be enraged at the conduct of his countrymen, " and refist their tyranny."-

But here a shriek unusually loud, accompanied with a dreadful rattling of chains, interrupted the discourse. The wretched Africans were just about to embark: they had turned their face to their country, as if to take a last adieu, and, with arms uplifted to the sky, were making the very atmosphere resound with their prayers

and imprecations,

that

# C H A P. II.

The foregoing scene, though it may be said to be imaginary, is strictly consistent with sact. It is a scene, to which the reader himself, may have been witness, if he has ever visited the place, where it is supposed to lie; as no circumstance whatever has been inserted in it, for which the fullest and most undeniable evidence cannot be produced. We shall proceed now to describe, in general terms, the treatment which the wretched Africans undergo, from the time of their embarkation.

When the African flaves, who are collected from various quarters, for the purposes of sale, are delivered over to the receivers, they are conducted in the manner above described to the ships. Their situation on board is beyond all description: for here they are crouded, hundreds of them together, into such a small compass, as would scarcely be thought sufficient to accommodate twenty, if considered as free men. This consinement soon produces an effect, that may be easily imagined. It generates a pestilential air, which, co-operating with bad provisions, occasions such a sickness and mortality among them, that not less than \* twenty thousand are generally taken off in every yearly transportation.

Thus confined in a pestilential prison, and almost entirely excluded from the chearful face of day, it remains for the sickly survivors to linger out a miserable existence, till the voyage is sinished. But are no farther evils to be expected in the interim, particularly if we add to their already wretched situation, the indignities

<sup>\*</sup> It is univerfally allowed, that at least one fifth of the exported negroes perish in the passage. This estimate is made from the time in which they are put on board, to the time when they are disposed of in the colonies. The French are supposed to lose the greatest number in the voyage, but particularly from this circumstance, because their slave ships are in general so very large, that many of the slaves that have been put on board sickly, die before the cargo can be completed.

that are daily offered them, and the regret which they must constantly feel, at being for ever forced from their connexions? These evils are but too apparent. Some of them have refolved, and, notwithstanding the threats of the receivers, have carried their resolves into execution, to starve themselves to death. Others, when they have been brought upon deck for air, if the least opportunity has offered, have leaped into the sea, and terminated their miseries at once. Others, in a fit of despair, have attempted to rise, and regain their liberty. But here what a scene of barbarity has constantly ensued.— Some of them have been instantly killed upon the spot; fome have been taken from the hold, have been bruised and mutilated in the most barbarous and shocking manner, and have been returned bleeding to their companions, as a fad example of refistance; while others, tied to the ropes of the ship, and mangled alternately with the whip and knife, have been left in that horrid situation, till they have expired.

But this is not the only inhuman treatment which they are frequently obliged to undergo; for if their should be any necessity, from tempestuous weather, for lightening the ship; or if it should be presumed on the voyage, that the provisions will fall short before the port can be made, they are, many of them, thrown into the sea, without any compunction of mind on the part of the receivers, and without any other regret for their loss, than that which avarice inspires. Wretched survivors! what must be their feelings at such a sight! how must they trembse to think of that servitude which is approaching, when the very dogs of the receivers have been retained on board, and preferred to their unossending countrymen. But indeed so lightly are these unhappy people esteemed, that their lives have been even taken away upon speculation: there has been an instance, \* within the last sive

<sup>\*</sup> This instance happened in a ship, commanded by one Collingwood. On the 29th of November, 1781, fifty-four of them were thrown into the sea alive; on the 30th forty-two more; and in about three days afterwards, twenty-fix. Ten others, who were brought upon

years, of one hundred and thirty-two of them being thrown into the fea, because it was supposed that, by this trick, their value could be recovered from the infurers.

But if the ship should arrive safe at its destined port. a circumstance which does not always happen, (for some have been blown up, and many lost) the wretched Africans do not find an alleviation of their forrow. Here they are again exposed to fale. Here they are again subjected to the inspection of other brutal receivers, who examine and treat them with an inhumanity, at which even avarice should blush. To this mortifying circumstance is added another, that they are picked out, as the purchaser pleases, without any consideration whether the wife is separated from her husband, or the mother from her fon: and if these cruel instances of separation fhould happen; if relations, when they find themselves about to be parted, should cling together; or if filial, conjugal, or parental affection, should detain them but a moment longer in each other's arms, than these second receivers should think sufficient, the lash instantly severs them from their embraces.

We cannot close our account of the treatment, which the wretched Africans undergo while in the hands of the first receivers, without mentioning an instance of wanton barbarity, which happened some time ago; particularly as it may be inserted with propriety in the present place, and may give the reader a better idea of the cruelties, to which they are continually exposed, than any that he may have yet conceived. To avoid making a mistake, we shall take the liberty that has been allowed us, and

M transcribe

upon the deck for the same purpose, did not wait to be hand-cuffed, but bravely leaped into the sea, and shared the sate of their companions. It is a fact, that the people on board this ship had not been put upon short allowance. The excuse which this execrable wretch made on board for his conduct, was the following, "that if the slaves, who were then sickly, had died a natural death, the loss would have been the owners; but as they were thrown alive into the sea, it would fall upon the underwriters."

transcribe it from a little manuscript account, with which. we have been favoured by a \* person of the strictest integrity, and who was at that time in the place where the transaction happened. "Not long after," says he, (continuing his account) " the perpetrator of a cruel 66 murder, committed in open day light, in the most 66 publick part of a town, which was the seat of govern-"ment, escaped every other notice than the curses of a " few of the more humane witnesses of his barbarity. "An officer of a Guinea ship, who had the care of a " number of new flaves, and was returning from the " fale-yard to the vessel with such as remained unfold, " observed a stout fellow among them rather slow in his 66 motions, which he therefore quickened with his rattan. "The flave foon afterwards fell down, and was raifed "by the fame application. Moving forwards a few yards, he fell down again; and this being taken as a " proof of his fullen perverse spirit, the enraged officer "furioufly repeated his blows till he expired at his feet. "The brute coolly ordered some of the surviving slaves to carry the dead body to the water's fide, where with-out any ceremony or delay, being thrown into the fea, " the tragedy was supposed to have been immediately " finished by the not more inhuman sharks, with which "the harbour then abounded. These voracious fish were supposed to have followed the vessels from the " coast of Africa, in which ten thousand slaves were " imported in that one feason, being allured by the fench, and daily fed by the dead carcasses thrown " overboard on the voyage."

If

<sup>\*</sup> This gentleman is at present resident in England. The author of this Essay, applied to him for some information on the treatment of slaves, so far as his own knowledge was concerned: He was so obliging as to surnish him with the written account alluded to, interspersed only with such instances, as he himself could undertake to answer for. The author, as he has never met with these instances before, and as they are of such high authority, intends to transcribe two or three of them, and insert them in the fourth: chapter. They will be found in inverted commas.

If the reader should observe here, that cattle are better protected in this country, than slaves in the colonies, his observation will be just. The beast which is driven to the market, is defended by law from the goad of the driver; whereas the wretched African, though an human being, and whose feelings receive of course a double poignancy from the power of reslection, is unnoticed in this respect in the colonial code, and may be goaded and beaten till he expires.

We may now take our leave of the first receivers. Their crime has been already estimated; and to reason farther upon it, would be unnecessary. For where the conduct of men is so manifestly impious, there can be no need, either of a single argument or a reslection; as every reader of sensibility will anticipate them in his own

feelings,

# C H A P. III.

When the wretched Africans are thus put into the hands of the fecond receivers, they are conveyed to the plantations, where they are totally confidered as cattle, or beafts of labour; their very children, if any should be born to them in that situation, being previously destined to the condition of their parents. But here a question arises, which will interrupt the thread of the narration for a little time, viz how far their descendants, who compose the fifth order of slaves, are justly reduced to servitude, and upon what principles the receivers defend their conduct.

Authors have been at great pains to inquire, why, in the ancient fervitude, the child has uniformly followed the condition of the mother. But we conceive that they would have faved themselves much trouble and have done themselves more credit, if instead of endeavouring to reconcile the custom with beathen notions, or their own laboured conjectures, they had shewn its inconsistency with reason and nature, and its repugnancy to common justice. Suffice it to say, that the whole theory of the ancients, with respect to the descendants of slaves,

may be reduced to this principle, "that as the parents, "by becoming property, were wholly confidered as cat"tle, their children, like the progeny of cattle, inherited 
their parental lot."

Such also is the excuse of the tyrannical receivers before mentioned. They alledge, that they have purchased the parents, that they can sell and dispose of them as they please, that they possess them under the same laws and limitations as their cattle, and that their children, like the progeny of these, become their property by birth.

But the abfurdity of the argument will immediately appear. It depends wholly on the fupposition, that the parents are brutes. If they are brutes, we shall instantly cease to contend: if they are men, which we think it not difficult to prove, the argument must immediately fall, as we have already shewn that there cannot justly

be any property whatever in the buman species.

It has appeared also, in the second part of this Essay, that as nature made every man's body and mind bis own, so no just person can be reduced to slavery against his own consent. Do the unfortunate offspring ever consent to be slaves?—They are slaves from their birth.—Are they guilty of crimes, that they lose their freedom?—They are slaves when they cannot speak—Are their parents abandoned? The crimes of the parents cannot justly extend to the children.

Thus then must the tyrannical receivers, who presume to sentence the children of slaves to servitude, if they mean to dispute upon the justice of their cause; either allow them to have been brutes from their birth, or to have been guilty of crimes at a time, when they were

incapable of offending the very King of Kings.

# C H A P. IV.

But to return to the narration. When the wretched Africans are conveyed to the plantations, they are confidered as beasts of labour, and are put to their respec-

tive work. Having led, in their own country, a life of indolence and ease, where the earth brings forth spontaneously the comforts of life, and spares frequently the toil and trouble of cultivation, they can hardly be expected to endure the drudgeries of servitude. Calculations are accordingly made upon their lives. It is conjectured, that if three in four survive what is called the feafoning, the bargain is highly favourable. This feafoning is faid to expire, when the two first years of their servitude are completed: It is the time which an African must take to be so accustomed to the colony, as to be able to endure the common labour of a plantation, and to be put into the gang. At the end of this period the calculations become verified, \* twenty thousand of those, who are annually imported, dying before the feasoning is over. This is furely an horrid and awful consideration: and thus does it appear, (and let it be remembered, that it is the lowest calculation that has been ever made upon the subject) that out of every annual supply that is thipped from the coast of Africa, + forty thousand lives are regularly expended, even before it can be faid, that there is really any additional stock for the colonies.

When

† Including the number that perish on the voyage, and in the seafoning. It is generally thought that not half the number purchased can be considered as an additional stock, and of course that 50,000 are consumed within the first two years from their embarkation.

<sup>\*</sup> One third of the whole number imported, is often computed to be lost in the feasoning which, in round numbers, will be 27000. The loss in the feasoning depends, in a great measure, on two circumstances, viz. on the number of what are called refuse slaves that are imported, and on the quantity of new land in the colony. In the French windward islands of Martinico, and Guadalope, which are cleared and highly cultivated, and in our old small islands one fourth, including refuse slaves, is considered as a general proportion. Rut in St. Domingo, where there is a great deal of new land annually taken into culture, and in other colonies in the same situation, the general proportion, including refuse slaves, is found to be one third. This therefore is a lower estimate than the former, and reduces the number to about 23000. We may observe, that this is the common estimate, but we have reduced it to 20000 to make it free from all objection.

When the feasioning is over, and the survivors are thus enabled to endure the usual task of slaves, they are considered as real and substantial supplies. \* From this

period therefore we shall describe their situation.

They are fummoned at five in the morning to begin their work. This work may be divided into two kinds, the culture of the fields, and the collection of grafs for cattle. The last is the most laborious and intolerable employment; as the grass can only be collected blade by blade, and is to be fetched frequently twice a day at a confiderable distance from the plantation. In these two occupations they are jointly taken up, with no other intermission than that of taking their subsistence twice, till nine at night. They then seperate for their respec-tive huts, when they gather sticks, prepare their supper, and affend their families This employs them till midnight, when they go to rest. Such is their daily way of life for rather more than half the year. They are sixteen hours, including two intervals at meals, in the fervice of their masters: they are employed three afterwards in their own necessary concerns; five only remain for sleep, and their day is finished.

During the remaining portion of the year, or the time of crop, the nature, as well as the time of their employment, is confiderably changed. The whole gang is generally divided into two or three bodies. One of these, besides the ordinary labour of the day, is kept in turn at the mills, that are constantly going, during the whole of the night. This is a dreadful encroach-

ment

<sup>\*</sup> That part of the account, that has been hitherto given, extends to all the Europeans and their colonists, who are concerned in this horrid practice. But we are forry that we must now make a distinction, and confine the remaining part of it to the colonists of the British West India islands, and to those of the southern provinces of North America. As the employment of slaves is different in the two parts of the world last mentioned, we shall content ourselves with describing it, as it exists in one of them, and we shall afterwards annex such treatment and such consequences as are applicable to both. We have only to add, that the reader must not consider our accounts as universally, but only generally, true.

ment upon their time of rest, which was before too short to permit them persectly to resresh their wearied limbs, and actually reduces their seep, as long as this season lasts, to about three hours and an half a night, upon a moderate \* computation. Those who can keep their eyes open during their nightly labour, and are willing to resist the drowsiness that is continually coming upon them, are presently worn out; while some of those, who are overcome, and who seed the mill between asseep and awake, suffer, for thus obeying the calls of nature, by the † loss of a limb. In this manner they go on, with little or no respite from their work, fill the crop season is over, when the year (from the time of our first description) is completed.

† To support a life of such unparalleled drudgery, we should at least expect to find, that they were comfortably clothed, and plentifully fed. But sad reverse! they have scarcely a covering to defend themselves against the inclemency of the night. Their provisions are frequently bad, and are always dealt out to them with such a sparing hand, that the means of a bare livelihood are not placed within the reach of sour out of sive of these unhappy people. It is a fact, that many of the disorders of slaves are contracted from eating the vegetables, which their little spots produce, before they are sufficiently ripe: a clear indication, that the calls of hunger are frequently so pressing, as not to suffer them to wait, till they can really enjoy them.

This fituation, of a want of the common necessaries of life, added to that of hard and continual labour, must be sufficiently painful of itself. How then must

the

<sup>\*</sup> This computation is made on a supposition, that the gang is divided into three bodies; we call it therefore moderate, because the gang is frequently divided into two bodies, which must therefore set up alternately every other night.

<sup>†</sup> An hand or arm being frequently ground off,

<sup>‡</sup> The reader will scarcely believe it, but it is a fact, that a slave's annual allowance from his master, for provisions, clothing, medicines when sick, &c. is limited, upon an average, to thirty shillings.

the pain be sharpened, if it be accompanied with severity! if an unfortunate flave does not come into the field exactly at the appointed time, if, drooping with fickness or fatigue, he appears to work unwillingly, or if the bundle of grass that he has been collecting, appears too small in the eye of the overseer, he is equally sure of experiencing the whip. This instrument erases the skin, and cuts out small portions of the flesh at almost every stroke; and is so frequently applied, that the fmack of it is all day long in the ears of those, who are in the vicinity of the plantations. This severity of masters, or managers, to their slaves, which is considered only as common discipline, is attended with bad effects. It enables them to behold instances of cruelty without commiseration, and to be guilty of them, without remorfe. Hence those many acts of deliberate mutilation, that have taken place on the flightest occasions: hence those many acts of inferiour, though shocking, barbarity, that have taken place without any occasion at all: \* the very flitting of ears has been confidered as an operation, so perfectly devoid of pain, as to have been performed for no other reason than that for which a brand is fet upon cattle, as a mark of property.

But this is not the only effect, which this feverity produces: for while it hardens their hearts, and makes them insensible of the misery of their fellow-creatures, it begets a turn for wanton cruelty. As a proof of this, we shall mention one, among the many instances that occur, where ingenuity has been exerted in contriving modes of

torture.

<sup>\* &</sup>quot;A boy having received fix flaves as a present from his father, "immediately slit their ears, and for the following reason, that as his father was a whimsical man, he might claim them again, un- less they were marked." We do not mention this instance as a confirmation of the passage to which it is annexed, but only to shew how cautious we ought to be in giving credit to what may be advanced in any work written in defence of slavery, by any native of the colonies; for being trained up to scenes of cruelty from his cradle, he may, consistently with his own feelings, represent that treatment as mild, at which we, who have never been used to see them, should absolutely shudder.

torture. "An iron coffin, with holes in it, was kept by a certain colonist, as an auxiliary to the lash. In this the poor victim of the master's resentment was inclosed, and placed sufficiently near a fire, to occasion extreme pain, and consequently shrieks and groans, until the revenge of the master was satiated, without any other inconvenience on his part, than a temporaty sufficiently near a fire, to occasion extreme pain, and consequently shrieks and groans, until the revenge of the master was satiated, without for the sufficient number of the state of the sufficient state of the brutal tyrant would have suffered a more irreparation ble loss.

"In mentioning this instance, we do not mean to insinuate; that it is common. We know that it was reprobated by many. All that we would infer from it
sis, that where men are habituated to a system of severity, they become wantonly cruel, and that the mere
toleration of such an instrument of torture, in any
country, is a clear indication, that this wretched class
of men do not there enjoy the protection of any laws, that

may be pretended to have been enacted in their favour.'

Such then is the general fituation of the unfortunate

Africans. They are beaten and tortured at difference.

Africans. They are beaten and tortured at discretion. They are badly clothed. They are miserably fed. Their drudgery is intense and incessant, and their rest short. For scarcely are their heads reclined, scarcely have their bodies a respite from the labour of the day, or the cruel hand of the overseer, but they are summoned to renew their sorrows. In this manner they go on from year to year, in a state of the lowest degradation, without a single law to protect them, without the possibility of redress, without a hope that their situation will be changed, unless death should terminate the scene.

Having described the general situation of these unfortunate people, we shall now take notice of the common consequences that are sound to attend it, and relate them separately, as they result either from long and painful labour, a want of the common accessaries of life, or continual severity.

Oppressed by a daily task of such immoderate labour as human nature is utterly unable to perform, many of

them run away from their masters. They fly to the recesses of the mountains, where they choose rather to live upon any thing that the soil affords them, nay, the very soil itself, than return to that bappy situation, which is represented by the receivers, as the condition of a slave.

It fometimes happens, that the manager of a mountain plantation, falls in with one of these; he immediately seizes him, and threatens to carry him to his former master, unless he will consent to live on the mountain and cultivate his ground. When his plantation is put in order, he carries the delinquent home, abandons him to all the fuggestions of despotick rage, and accepts a reward for his honesty. The unhappy wretch is chained, scourged, tortured; and all this, because he obeyed the dictates of nature, and wanted to be free. who is there, that would not have done the same thing, in the same situation? Who is there, that has once known the charms of liberty, that would not fly from despotism? And yet, by the impious laws of the receivers, the \* absence of six months from the lash of tyranny is-death.

But this law is even mild, when compared with another against the same offence, which was in force sometime ago, and which we fear is even now in force, in some of those colonies which this account of the treatment comprehends. "Advertisements have frequently ap"peared there, offering a reward for the apprehending of fugitive slaves either alive or dead. The following instance was given us by a person of unquestionable veracity, under whose own observation it fell. As he was travelling in one of the colonies alluded to, he

<sup>\*</sup> In this case he is considered as a criminal against the state. The marsbal, an officer answering to our sheriff, superintends his execution, and the master receives the value of the slave from the publick treasury. We may observe here, that in all cases where the delinquent is a criminal of the state, he is executed, and his value is received in the same manner. He is tried and condemned by two or three justices of the peace, and without any intervention of a jury.

" observed some people in pursuit of a poor wretch, 
who was seeking in the wilderness an asylum from his 
labours. He heared the discharge of a gun, and soon 
afterwards stopping at an house for refreshment, the 
head of the fugitive, still reeking with blood, was 
brought in and laid upon a table with exultation. 
The production of such a trophy was the proof required 
by law to entitle the heroes to their reward." Now 
reader determine if you can, who were the most execrable; the rulers of the state in authorizing murder, 
or the people in being bribed to commit it.

This is one of the common consequences of that immoderate share of labour, which is imposed upon them: nor is that, which is the result of a scanty allowance of food, less to be lamented. The wretched African is often to deeply pierced by the excruciating fangs of hunger, as almost to be driven to despair. What is he to do in fuch a trying fituation? Let him apply to the receivers. Alas! the majesty of receivership is too facred for the appeal, and the intrusion would be fatal. Thus attacked on the one hand, and shut out from every possibility of relief on the other, he has only the choice of being starved, or of relieving his necessities by taking a small portion of the fruits of his own labour. Horrid crime! to be found eating the cane, which probably his own hands have planted, and to be eating it, because his necessities were preffing! This crime however is of fuch a magnitude, as always to be accompanied with the whip; and fo unmercifully has it been applied on fuch an occasion, as to have been the cause, in wet weather, of the delinquent's death. But the smart of the whip has not been the only pain that the wretched Africans have experienced. Any thing that passion could seize, and convert into an instrument of punishment, has been used; and, horrid to relate! the very knife has not been overlooked in the fit of phrenzy. Ears have been slit, eyes have been beaten out, and bones have been broken; and fo frequently has this been the case, that it has been a matter of constant lamentation with disinterested people, who out of curiofity have attended the \* markets to which these unhappy people weekly resort, that they have not been able to turn their eyes on any group of them whatever, but they have beheld these inhuman marks of passion, despotism, and caprice.

But these instances of barbarity have not been able to deter them from similar proceedings. And indeed, how can it be expected that they should? They have still the same appetite to be satisfied as before, and to drive them to desparation. They creep out clandestinely by night, and go in search of food into their master's, or some neighbouring plantation. But here they are almost equally sure of suffering. The watchman, who will be punished himself, if he neglects his duty, frequently seizes them in the sact. No excuse or intreaty will avail; he must punish them for an example, and he must punish them, not with a stick, nor with a whip, but with a cutlass. Thus it happens, that these unhappy slaves, if they are taken, are either sent away mangled in a barbarous manner, or are killed upon the spot.

We may now mention the consequences of the severi-The wretched Africans, daily subjected to the lash, and unmercifully whipt and beaten on every trifling occasion, have been found to resist their opposers. Unpardonable crime! that they should have the feelings of nature! that their breasts should glow with resentment on an injury! that they should be so far overcome, as to refift those, whom they are under no obligations to obey, and whose only title to their services consists in a violation of the rights of men! What has been the consequence? But here let us spare the feelings of the reader, (we wish we could spare our own) and let us only say, without a recital of the cruelty, that they have been murdered at the discretion of their masters. For let the reader observe, that the life of an African is only valued at a price, that would scarcely \_

<sup>\*</sup> Particularly in Jamaica. These observations were made by disinterested people, who were there for three or four years during the late war.

fcarcely purchase an horse; that the master has a power of murdering his slave, if he pays but a trisling sine; and that the murder must be attended with uncommon circumstances of horrour, if it even produces an inqui-

ry.

Immortal Alfred! father of our invaluable constitution! parent of the civil bleffings we enjoy! how ought thy laws to excite our love and veneration, who hast forbidden us, thy posterity, to tremble at the frown of tyrants! how ought they to perpetuate thy name, as venerable, to the remotest ages, who has secured, even to the meanest servant, a fair and impartial trial! How much does nature approve thy laws, as confistent with her own feelings, while she absolutely turns pale, trembles, and recoils, at the institutions of these receivers! Execrable men! you do not murder the horse, on which you only ride; you do not mutilate the cow, which only affords you her milk; you do not torture the dog, which is but a partial fervant of your pleasures: but these unfortunate men, from whom you derive your very pleasures and your fortunes, you torture, mutilate, murder at discretion! Sleep then you receivers, if you can, while you scarcely allow these unfortunate people to rest at all! feast if you can, and indulge your genius, while you daily apply to these unfortunate people the stings of severity and hunger! exult in riches, at which even avarice ought to shudder, and which humanity must detest!

# C H A P. V.

Some people may suppose, from the melancholy account that has been given in the preceding chapter, that we have been absolutely dealing in romance: that the scene exhibited is rather a dreary picture of the imagination, than a representation of fact. Would to heaven, for the honour of human nature, that this were really the case! We wish we could say, that we have no testimony to produce for any of our affertions, and that our description

description of the general treatment of slaves has been

greatly exaggerated.

But the receivers, notwithstanding the ample and difinterested evidence, that can be brought on the occasion, do not admit the description to be true. They say first, "that if the slavery were such as has been now represerved, no human being could possibly support it solved in their prime. Let them reslect upon the prodigious supplies that are annually required, and their argument will be nothing less than a confession, that the slavery has been justly depicted.

They appeal next to every man's own reason, and desire him to think seriously, whether "felf-interest" will not always restrain the master from acts of cruelty to the slave, and whether such accounts therefore,
as the foregoing, do not contain within themselves,
their own resutation." We answer, "No." For if
this restraining principle be as powerful as it is imagined, why does not the general conduct of men afford
us a better picture? What is imprudence, or what is
vice, but a departure from every man's own interest,
and yet these are the characteristicks of more than half
the world?——

-But, to come more closely to the present case, felfinterest will be found but a weak barrier against the sallies of passion: particularly where it has been daily indulged in its greatest latitude, and there are no laws to restrain its calamitous effects. If the observation be true, that passion is a short madness, then it is evident that selfinterest, and every other consideration, must be lost, so long as it continues. We cannot have a stonger instance of this, than in a circumstance related in the second part of this Essay, "that though the Africans have gone to war for the express purpose of procuring slaves, yet fo great has been their refentment at the refistance they have frequently found, that their passion has entirely got the better of their interest, and they have murdered all without any discrimination, either of age or sex." Such may be prefumed to be the case with the no less

favage receivers. Impressed with the most haughty and tyrannical notions, easily provoked, accustomed to indulge their anger, and, above all, habituated to scenes of cruelty, and unawed by the fear of laws, they will hardly be found to be exempt from the common failings of human nature, and to spare an unlucky slave, at a time when men of cooler temper, and better regulated passions, are so frequently blind to their own interest.

But if passion may be supposed to be generally more than a balance for interest, how must the scale be turned in favour of the melancholy picture exhibited, when we restect that self-preservation additionally steps in, and demands the most rigorous severity. For when we consider that where there is one master, there are sifty slaves; that the latter have been all forcibly torn from their country, and are retained in their present situation by violence; that they are perpetually at war in their hearts with their oppressors, and are continually cherishing the seeds of revenge; it is evident that even avarice herself, however cool and deliberate, however free from passion and caprice, must sacrifice her own fordid feelings, and adopt a system of tyranny and oppression, which it must be ruinous to pursue.

Thus then, if no picture had been drawn of the fituation of flaves, and it had been left folely to every man's fober judgment to determine, what it might probably be, he would conclude, that if the fituation were justly described, the page must be frequently stained with

acts of uncommon cruelty.

It remains only to make a reply to an objection, that is usually advanced against particular instances of cruelty to slaves, as recorded by various writers. It is said that "fome of these are so inconceivably, and beyond "all example inhuman, that their very excess above the common measure of cruelty shews them at once exaggerated and incredible." But their credibility shall be estimated by a supposition. Let us suppose that the following instance had been recorded by a writer of the highest reputation, "that the master of a ship, bound

66 to the western colonies with slaves, on a presumption " that many of them would die, selected an bundred " and thirty-two of the most sickly, and ordered them to be thrown into the sea, to recover their value from " the infurers, and, above all, that the fatal order was of put into execution." What would the reader have thought on the occasion? Would he have believed the fact? It would have furely staggered his faith; because he could never have heard that any one man ever was, and could never have supposed that any one man ever could be, guilty of the murder of fuch a number of his fellow creatures. But when he is informed that such a fact as this came before \* a court of justice in this very country; that it happened within the last five years; that hundreds can come forwards and fay, that they heard the melancholy evidence with tears; what bounds is he to place to his belief? The great God, who looks down upon all his creatures with the fame impartial eye, feems to have infatuated the parties concerned, that they might bring the horrid circumstance to light, that it might be recorded in the annals of a publick court, as an authentick specimen of the treatment which the unfortunate Africans undergo, and at the same time, as an argument to flew, that there is no species of cruelty, that is recorded to have been exercised upon these wretched people, so enormous that it may not readily be believed.

### C H A P. VI.

If the treatment then, as before described, is confirmed by reason, and the great credit that is due to disinterested writers on the subject; if the unfortunate Africans are used, as if their slesh were stone, and their vitals brass; by what arguments do you receivers defend your conduct?

 $\mathbf{Y}$ ou

<sup>\*</sup> The action was brought by the owners against the under-writers, to recover the value of the murdered flaves. It was tried at Guildhall.

You say that a great part of your savage treatment consists in punishment for real offences, and frequently for such offences, as all civilized nations have concurred in punishing. The first charge that you exhibit against them is specifick, it is that of theft. But how much rather ought you receivers to blush, who reduce them to such a situation! who reduce them to the dreadful alternative, that they must either steal or perish! How much rather ought you receivers to be considered as robbers yourselves, who cause these unfortunate people to be stolen! And how much greater is your crime, who are robbers of human liberty!

The next charge which you exhibit against them, is general, it is that of rebellion; a crime of such a latitude, that you can impose it upon almost every action, and of such a nature, that you always annex to it the most excruciating pain. But what a contradiction is this to common sense! Have the wretched Africans formally resigned their freedom? Have you any other claim upon their obedience, than that of sorce? If then they are your subjects, you violate the laws of government, by making them unhappy. But if they are not your subjects, then, even though they should resist your proceedings, they are not rebellious.

But what do you say to that long catalogue of offences, which you punish, and of which no people but yourselves take cognizance at all? You say that the wisdom of legislation has inserted it in the colonial laws, and that you punish by authority. But do you allude to that execrable code, that authorises murder? that tempts an unoffended person to kill the slave, that abhors and slies your service? that delegates a power, which no host of men, which not all the world, can

poffefs?——

Or,—What do you fay to that daily unmerited feverity, which you consider only as common discipline? Here you say that the Africans are vicious, that they are all of them ill-disposed, that you must of necessity be severe. But can they be well-disposed to their oppressions? In their own country they were just, generous, hospitable:

hospitable: qualities, which all the African historians allow them eminently to possess. If then they are vicious, they must have contracted many of their vices from yourfelves; and as to their own native vices, if any have been imported with them, are they not amiable, when compared with yours?

Thus then do the excuses, which have been hitherto made by the receivers, force a relation of such circumstances, as makes their conduct totally inexcusable, and, instead of diminishing at all, highly aggravates their

guilt.

# C H A P. VII.

We come now to that other system of reasoning, which is always applied, when the former is confuted; " that the Africans are an inferior link of the chain of " nature, and are made for flavery."

This affertion is proved by two arguments; the first of which was advanced also by the ancients, and is

drawn from the inferiority of their capacities.

Let us allow then for a moment, that they appear to have no parts, that they appear to be void of understanding. And is this wonderful, when you receivers depress their senses by hunger? Is this wonderful, when by incessant labour, the continual application of the lash, and the most inhuman treatment that imagination can devise, you overwhelm their genius, and hinder it from breaking forth?—No,—You confound their abilities by the severity of their servitude: for as a spark of fire, if crushed by too great a weight of incumbent fuel, cannot be blown into a flame, but suddenly expires, so the human mind, if depressed by rigorous servitude, cannot be excited to a display of those faculties, which might otherwise have shone with the brightest lustre.

Neither is it wonderful in another point of view. For what is it that awakens the abilities of men, and distinguishes them from the common herd? Is it not often the amiable hope of becoming ferviceable to individuals, or the state? Is it not often the hope of riches, or of power? Is it not frequently the hope of temporary honours, or a lasting fame? These principles have all a wonderful effect upon the mind. They call upon it to exert its faculties, and bring those talents to the publick view, which had otherwise been concealed. But the unfortunate Africans have no such incitements as these, that they should shew their genius. They have no hope of riches, power, honours, fame. They have no hope but this, that their miseries will be soon terminated by death.

And here we cannot but censure and expose the murmurings of the unthinking and the gay; who, going on in a continual round of pleasure and prosperity. repine at the will of Providence, as exhibited in the shortness of human duration. But let a weak and insirm old age overtake them: let them experience calamities: let them seed but half the miseries which the wretched Africans undergo, and they will praise the goodness of Providence, who hath made them mortal; who hath prescribed certain ordinary bounds to the life of man; and who, by such a limitation, hath given all men this comfortable hope, that however persecuted in life, a time will come, in the common course of nature, when their sufferings will have an end.

Such then is the nature of this fervitude, that we can hardly expect to find in those, who undergo it, even the glimple of genius. For if their minds are in a continual state of depression, and if they have no expectations in life to awaken their abilities, and make them eminent, we cannot be furprized if a fullen gloomy stupidity should be the leading mark in their character; or if they should appear inferiour to those, who do not only enjoy the in-valuable bleffings of freedom, but have every prospect before their eyes, that can allure them to exert their faculties. Now, if to these considerations we add, that the wretched Africans are torn from their country in a state of nature, and that in general, as long as their flavery continues, every obstacle is placed in the way of their improvement, we shall have a sufficient answer to any argument that may be drawn from the inferiority of their capacities.

It appears then from the circumstances that have been mentioned, that to form a true judgment of the abilities of these unfortunate people, we must either take a general view of them before their slavery commences, or confine our attention to such, as, after it has commenced, have had any opportunity given them of shewing their genius either in arts or letters. If, upon such a fair and impartial view, there should be any reason to suppose, that they are at all inferiour to others in the same situation, the argument will then gain some of that weight and importance, which it wants at present.

In their own country, where we are to fee them first. we must expect that the prospect will be unfavourable. They are mostly in a savage state. Their powers of mind are limited to sew objects. Their ideas are consequently few. It appears, however, that they follow the same mode of life, and exercise the same arts, as the ancestors of those very Europeans, who boast of their great superiority, are described to have done in the same uncultivated state. This appears from the Nubian's Geography, the writings of Leo, the Moor, and all the fubsequent histories, which those, who have visited the African continent, have written from their own inspection. Hence three conclusions; that their abilities are sufficient for their fituation;—that they are as great, as those of other people have been, in the same stage of society; and that they are as great as those of any civilized people whatever, when the degree of the barbarism of the one is drawn into a comparison with that of the civilization of the other.

Let us now follow them to the colonies. They are carried over in the unfavorable fituation described. It is observed here, that though their abilities cannot be estimated high, from a want of cultivation, they are yet various, and that they vary in proportion as the nation, from which they have been brought, has advanced more or less in the scale of social life. This observation, which is so frequently made, is of great importance: for if their abilities expand in proportion to the improve-

ment

ment of their state, it is a clear indication, that if they were equally improved, they would be equally ingenious.

But here, before we consider any opportunities that may be afforded them, let it be remembered that even their most polished situation may be called barbarous, and that this circumstance, should they appear less docile than others, may be considered as a sufficient answer to any objection that may be made to their capacities. Notwithstanding this, when they are put to the mechanical arts, they do not discover a want of ingenuity.—
They attain them in as short a time as the Europeans, and arrive at a degree of excellence equal to that of their teachers. This is a fact, almost universally known, and affords us this proof, that having learned with facility such of the mechanical arts, as they have been taught, they are capable of attaining any other, at least, of the same class, if they should receive but the same instruction.

With respect to the liberal arts, their proficiency is certainly less; but not less in proportion to their time and opportunity of study; not less, because they are less capable of attaining them, but because they have seldom or ever an opportunity of learning them at all. It is yet extraordinary that their talents appear, even in some of these sciences, in which they are totally uninstructed. Their abilities in musick are such, as to have been generally noticed. They play frequently upon a variety of instruments, without any other affishance than their own ingenuity. They have also tunes of their own composition. Some of these have been imported among us; are now in use; and are admired for their sprightlines and ease, though the ungenerous and prejudiced importer has concealed their original.

Neither are their talents in poetry less conspicuous. Every occurrence, if their spirits are not too greatly depressed, is turned into a song. These songs are said to be incoherent and nonsensical. But this proceeds principally from two causes, an improper conjunction of words, arising from an ignorance of the language in which

which they compose; and a wildness of thought, arising from the different manner, in which the organs of rude and civilized people will be struck by the same object. And as to their want of harmony and rhyme, which is the last objection, the difference of pronunciation is the cause. Upon the whole, as they are perfectly consistent with their own ideas, and are strictly musical as pronounced by themselves, they afford us as high a proof of their poetical powers, as the works of the most acknowledged poets.

But where these impediments have been removed, where they have received an education, and have known and pronounced the language with propriety, these defects have vanished, and their productions have been less objectionable. For a proof of this, we appeal to the writings of an \* African girl, who made no contemptible appearance in this species of composition. She was kidnapped when only eight years old, and, in the year 1761, was transported to America, where she was fold with other flaves. She had no school education there, but receiving fome little instruction from the family, with whom the was to fortunate as to live, the obtained fuch a knowledge of the English language within sixteen months from the time of her arrival, as to be able to speak it and read it to the astonishment of those who heard her. She foon afterwards learned to write, and, having a great inclination to learn the Latin tongue, she was indulged by her master, and made a progress. Her Poetical works were published with his permission, in the year 1773. They contain thirty-eight pieces on different fubjects. We shall beg leave to make a short extract from two or three of them, for the observation of the reader.

From

<sup>\*</sup> Phillis Wheatley, negro slave to Mr. John Wheatley, of Befton, in New-England.

# \* From an Hymn to the Evening.

- " Fill'd with the praise of him who gives the light,
- " And draws the fable curtains of the night,
- " Let placid flumbers footh each weary mind.
- " At morn to wake more heav'nly and refin'd;
- " So shall the labours of the day begin,
- "More pure and guarded from the mares of fin.



# From an Hymn to the Morning.

- " Aurora hail! and all the thousand dies,
- " That deck thy progress through the vaulted skies!
- " The morn awakes, and wide extends her rays,
- " On ev'ry leaf the gentle zephyr plays.
- " Harmonious lays the feather'd race resume,
- "Dart the bright eye, and shake the painted plume.



### From Thoughts on Imagination.

- "Now here, now there, the roving fancy flies,
- " Till some lov'd object strikes her wand'ring eyes,
- "Whose filken fetters all the senses bind,
- " And foft captivity involves the mind.

" Imagination!

\* Lest it should be doubted whether these Poems are genuine, we shall transcribe the names of those, who signed a certificate of their authenticity.

His Excellency Thomas Hutchinfon, Governor. The Honourable Andrew Oliver, Lieutenant Governor.

The Hon. Thomas Hubbard, The Hon. John Erving, The Hon. James Pitts, The Hon. Harrifon Gray, The Hon. James Bowdoin, John Hancock, Efq. Joseph Green, Efq. Richard Carey, Efq.

The Rev. Cha. Chauncy, D. D. The Rev. Mather Byles, D. D. The Rev. Ed. Pemberton. D. D. The Rev. Andrew Elliot, D. D. The Rev. Sam. Cooper, D. D. The Rev. Samuel Mather, The Rev. John Moorhead, Mr. John Wheatley, her Master.

" Imagination! who can fing thy force,"

" Or who describe the swiftness of thy course?

"Soaring through air to find the bright abode, "Th' empyreal palace of the thund'ring God,

"We on thy pinions can surpass the wind,

" And leave the rolling universe behind:

" From star to star the mental opticks rove,

" Measure the skies, and range the realms above.

"There in one view we grafp the mighty whole, "Or with new worlds amaze th' unbounded foul.

----- &c. &c.

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Such is the poetry which we produce as a proof of our affertions. How far it has succeeded, the reader may by this time have determined in his own mind.—We shall therefore only beg leave to accompany it with this observation, that if the authoress was designed for flavery, (as the argument must confess) the greater part of the inhabitants of Britain must lose their claim to freedom.

To this poetry we shall only add, as a farther proof of their abilities, the Prose compositions of Ignatius Sancho, who received some little education. His letters are too well known, to make any extract, or indeed any farther mention of him, necessary. If other examples of African genius should be required, suffice it to say, that they can be produced in abundance; and that if we were allowed to enumerate instances of African gratitude, patience, sidelity, honour, as so many instances of good sense, and a sound understanding, we fear that thousands of the enlightened Europeans would have occasion to blush.

But an objection will be made here, that the two perfons whom we have particularized by name, are prodigies, and that if we were to live for many years, we should scarcely meet with two other Africans of the same description. But we reply, that considering their situation as before described, two persons, above mediocrity in the literary way, are as many as can be expected withint a certain period of years; and farther, that if these are prodigies, they are only such prodigies as every day would produce, if they had the same opportunities of acquiring knowledge as other people, and the same expectations in life to excite their gensus. This has been constantly and solemnly afferted by the pious Benezet, whom we have mentioned before, as having devoted a considerable part of his time to their instruction. This great man, for we cannot but mention him with veneration, had a better opportunity of knowing them than any person whatever, and he always uniformly declared, that he could never find a difference between their capacities and those of other people; that they were as capable of reasoning as any individual Europeans; that they were as capable of the highest intellectual attainments; in short, that their abilities were equal, and that they only wanted to be equally cultivated, to afford specimens of as sine productions.

Thus then does it appear from the testimony of this venerable man, whose authority is sufficient of itself to silence all objections against African capacity, and from the instances that have been produced, and the observations that have been made on the occasion, that if the minds of the Africans were unbroken by slavery; if they had the same expectations in life as other people, and the same opportunities of improvement, they would be equal, in all the various branches of science, to the Europeans, and that the argument that states them "to be an inferiour link of the chain of nature, and designed for servitude," as far as it depends on the inferiority of their capacities, is wholly malevolent and false. \*

In the Preface.

<sup>\*</sup> As to Mr. Hume's affertions with respect to African capacity, we have passed them over in silence, as they have been so admirably resuted by the learned Dr. Beattie, in his Essay on Truth, to which we refer the reader. The whole of this admirable resutation extends from p. 458, to 464.

#### C H A P. VIII.

The second argument, by which it is attempted to be proved, "that the Africans are an inferiour link of the "chain of nature, and are designed for slavery," is drawn from colour, and from thôse other marks, which distinguish them from the inhabitants of Europe.

To prove this with the greater facility, the receivers divide in opinion. Some of them contend that the Africans, from these circumstances, are the descendants of \* Cain: others, that they are the posterity of Ham; and that as it was declared by divine inspiration, that these should be servants to the rest of the world, so they are designed for slavery; and that the reducing of them to such a situation is only the accomplishment of the will of heaven: while the rest, considering them from the same circumstances as a totally distinct species of men, conclude them to be an inferiour link of the chain of nature, and deduce the inference described.

To answer these arguments in the clearest and fullest manner, we are under the necessity of making two suppositions, first, that the scriptures are true; secondly,

that they are false.

If then the scriptures are true, it is evident that the posterity of Cain were extinguished in the flood. Thus

one of the arguments is no more.

With respect to the curse of Ham, it appears also that it was limited; that it did not extend to the posterity of all his sons, but only to the † descendants of him who was called Canaan: by which it was foretold that the Canaanites, a part of the posterity of Ham, should serve the posterity of Shem and Japhet. Now how does it appear that these wretched Africans are the descendants of Canaan?—By those marks, it will be said, which distinguish them from the rest of the world,—But where

are

<sup>\*</sup> Genesis, ch. iv. 15.

<sup>†</sup> Genelis, ch. ix. 25, 26, 27.

are these marks to be found in the divine writings? In what page is it said, that the Canaanites were to be known by their colour, their features, their form, or the very hair of their heads, which is brought into the account?—But alas! so far are the divine writings from giving any such account, that they shew the affertion to be false. They shew that the ‡ descendants of Cush were of the colour, to which the advocates for slavery allude; and of course, that there was no such limitation of colour to the posterity of Canaan, or the inheritors of the curse.

Suppose we should now shew, upon the most undeniable evidence, \* that those of the wretched Africans, who

‡ Jeremiah says, ch. xiii. 23, "Can the Æthiopean change his co"lour, or the leopard his spot?" Now the word, which is here
translated Æthiopean, is in the original Hebrew "the descendant of
"Cush," which shews that this colour was not confined to the descendants of Ganaan, as the advocates for slavery affert.

\* It is very extraordinary that the advocates for flavery should consider those Africans, whom they call negroes, as the descendants of Canaan, when sew historical facts can be so well ascertained, as that out of the descendants of the four sons of Ham, the descendants of Canaan were the only people, (if we except the Carthaginians, who were a colony of Canaan, and were afterwards ruined) who did not settle in that quarter of the globe. Africa was incontrovertibly peopled by the posterity of the three other sons. We cannot shew this in a clearer manner, than in the words of the learned Mr. Bryant, in his letter to Mr. Granville Sharp on this subject.

"We learn from the scripture, that Ham had four sons, Chus, Mizra"im, Phut, and Canaan, Gen. x. 5, 6. Canaan occupied Palestine, and
the country called by his name: Mizraim, Egypt: but Phut passed
deep into Africa, and, I believe, most of the nations in that part of the
world are descended from him: at least more than from any other
person." Josephus says, "that Phut was the founder of the nations
in Lybia, and the people were from him called Phuty. Antiq. L. I,
c. 7. "By Lybia he understands, as the Greeks did, Africa in general; for the particular country called Lybia Proper, was peopled
by the Lubim, or Lehabim, one of the branches from Mizraim.
Chron. Paschale, p. 29.

"The fons of Phut settled in Mauritania, where was a country called Phutia, and a river of the like denomination. Mauritania.

" Fluvine

who are fingled out as inheriting the curse, are the descendants of Cush or Phut; and that we should shew farther, that but a fingle remnant of Canaan, which was afterwards ruined, was ever in Africa at all.—Here all is consternation. --

But unfortunately again for the argument, though wonderfully for the confirmation that the scriptures are of divine original, the whole prophecy has been completed. A part of the descendants of Canaan were hewers of wood and drawers of water, and became tributary and subject to the Israelites, or the descendants of Shem. The Greeks afterwards, as well as the Romans, who were both the descendants of Japhet, not only subdued those who were settled in Syria and Palestine, but pursued and conquered all such as were then remaining. These were the Tyrians and Carthaginians:

" Fluvius usque ad præsens Tempus Phut diciter, omnisq; circa eum " Regio Phutensis. Hi ron, Tradit. Hebrææ. - Amnem, quem vocant " Fut." Pliny, L. 5. c. 1 Some of this family settled above Ægypt, " near Æthiopia, and were styled Troglodytæ. Syncellus, p. 47. " Many of them paffed inland, and peopled the Mediteranean " country."

" In process of time the sons of Chus also, (after their expultion " from Egypt) made fettlements upon the fea coast of Africa, and " came into Mauritania. Hence we find traces of them also in the " names of places, fuch as Churis, Chusares, upon the coast: and a " river Chufa, and a city Cotta, together with a promontary, Cotis,

" in Mauritania, all denominated from Chus; who at different times, " and by different people, was called Chus, Cuth, Cofb, and Cotis .-

"The river Cusa is mentioned by Pliny, Lib. 5. c. 1. and by Ptolo-" my." "Many ages after these settlements, there was another eruption " of the Cushites into these parts, under the name of Saracens and "Moors, who over-ran Africa, to the very extremity of Mount Atlas, "They passed over and conquered Spain to the north, and they ex-" tended themselves southward, as I said in my treatise, to the rivers " Senegal and Gambia, and as low as the Gold Coast. I mentioned this, " because I do not think that they proceeded much farther: most of " the nations to the fouth being, as I imagine, of the race of Phut. "The very country upon the river Gambia on one fide, is at this day

" called Phuta, of which Bluet, in his history of Juba Ben Solomon, " gives an account."

the former of whom were ruined by Alexander and the Greeks, the latter by Scipio and the Romans.

It appears then that the second argument is wholly inapplicable and false: that it is false in its application, because those, who were the objects of the curse, were a totally distinct people: that it is false in its proof, because no such distinguishing marks, as have been specified, are to be found in the divine writings: and that, if the proof could be made out, it would be now inapplicable. as the curse has been long compleated.

With respect to the third argument, we must now suppose that the scriptures are falle; that mankind did not all spring from the same original; that there are different species of men. Now what must we justly conclude from such a supposition? Must we conclude that one species is inferiour to another, and that the inferiority depends upon their colour, or their features, or their form?—No—We must now consult the analogy of nature, and the conclusion will be this: "that as she tempered the bodies of the different species of men in a different degree, to enable them to endure the respective climates of their habitation, so she gave them a variety of colour and appearance with a like benevolent design."

To sum up the whole, If the scriptures are true, it is evident that the posterity of Cain are no more; that the curse of Ham has been accomplished; and that, as all men were derived from the same stock, so this variety of appearance in men must either have proceeded from some interposition of the Deity; or from a co-operation of certain causes, which have an effect upon the human frame, and have the power of changing it more or less from its primitive appearance, as they happen to be more or less numerous or powerful than those, which acted upon the frame of man in the first seat of his habitation. If from the interpolition of the Deity, then we must conclude that he, who bringeth good out of evil, produced it for their convenience. If, from the co-operation of the causes before related, what argument may not be found against any society of men, who should happen to differ, in the points alluded to, from ourselves?

If, on the other hand, the scriptures are false, then it is evident, that there was neither such a person as Cain nor Ham, nor Canaan; and that nature bestowed such colour, features, and form, upon the different species of men, as were best adapted to their situation.

Thus, on which ever supposition it is founded, the whole argument must fall. And indeed it is impossible that it can stand, even in the eye of common sense.— For if you admit the form of men as a justification of flavery, you may subjugate your own brother: if features, then you must quarrel with all the world: if colour, where are you to stop? It is evident, that if you travel from the equator to the nothern pole, you will find a regular gradation of colour from black to white. Now if you can justly take him for your slave, who is of the deepest die, what hinders you from taking him also, who only differs from the former but by a shade. Thus you may proceed, taking each in a regular fuccesfion to the poles. But who are you, that thus take into flavery fo many people? Where do you live yourfelf? Do you live in Spain, or in France, or in Britain? If in either of these countries, take care lest the whiter natives of the north should have a claim upon yourself.—But the argument is too ridiculous to be farther noticed.

Having now filenced the whole argument, we might immediately proceed to the discussion of other points, without even declaring our opinion as to which of the suppositions may be right, on which it has been resuted; but we do not think ourselves at liberty to do this. The present age would rejoice to find that the scriptures had no foundation, and would anxiously catch at the writings of him, who should mention them in a doubtful manner. We shall therefore declare our sentiments, by afferting that they are true, and that all mankind, however various their appearance, are derived from the same

flock.

To prove this, we shall not produce those innumerable arguments, by which the scriptures have stood the test of ages, but advert to a single fact. It is an universal law, observable throughout the whole creation,

that if two animals of a different species propagate, their offspring is unable to continue its own species. By this admirable law, the different species are preserved distinct; every possibility of consusion is prevented, and the world is forbidden to be over-run by a race of monsters. Now, if we apply this law to those of the human kind, who are said to be of a distinct species from each other, it immediately sails. The mulattoe is as capable of continuing his own species as his father; a clear and irrefragable proof, that the † scripture account of the creation is true, and that "God, who hath made the world, "hath made of \* one blood all the nations of men that "dwell on all the face of the earth."

But if this be the case, it will be said that mankind were originally of one colour; and it will be asked at the same time, what it is probable that the colour was, and how they came to assume so various an appearance? To each of these we shall make that reply, which we conceive to be the most rational.

As mankind were originally of the same stock, so it is evident that they were originally of the same colour. But how shall we attempt to ascertain it? Shall we Englishmen say, that it was the same as that which we now find to be peculiar to ourselves?—No—This would be a vain and partial consideration, and would betray our judgment

† When America was first discovered, it was thought by some, that the scripture account of the creation was false, and that there were different species of men, because they could never suppose that people, in so rude a state as the Americans, could have transported themselves to that continent from any parts of the known world. This opinion however was resuted by the celebrated Captain Cook, who shewed that the traject between the continents of Asia and America, was as short as some, which people in as rude a state have been actually known to pass. This affords an excellent caution against an ill-judged and hasty censure of the divine writings, because every difficulty which may be started, cannot be instantly cleared up.

\* The divine writings, which affert that all men were derived from the fame flock, shew also, in the same instance of Cush, p. 115,

that some of them had changed their original complexion.

judgment to have arisen from that false fondness, which habituates us to suppose, that every thing belonging to ourselves is the perfectest and the best. Add to this, that we should always be liable to a just reproof from every inhabitant of the globe, whose colour was different from our own; because he would justly say, that he had as good a right to imagine that his own was the primitive colour, as that of any other people.

How then shall we attempt to ascertain it? Shall we look into the various climates of the earth, fee the colour that generally prevails in the inhabitants of each, and apply the rule? This will be certainly free from partiality, and will afford us a better prospect of success: for as every particular district has its particular colour, so it is evident that the complexion of Noah and his fons, from whom the rest of the world were descended. was the same as that, which is peculiar to the country, which was the feat of their habitation. This, by fuch a mode of decision, will be found a dark olive; a beautiful colour, and a just medium between white and black. That this was the primitive colour, is highly probable from the observations that have been made; and, if admitted, will afford a valuable lesson to the Europeans, to be cautious how they deride those of the opposite complexion, as there is great reason to presume, that the purest \* white is as far removed from the primitive colour as the deepest black.

We come now to the grand question, which is, that if mankind were originally of this or any other colour, how came it to pass, that they should wear so various an appearance? We reply, as we have had occasion to say before, either by the interposition of the Deity; or by a corporation of certain causes, which have an effect upon the human frame, and have the power of changing it more or less

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<sup>\*</sup> The following are the grand colours discernible in mankind, between which there are many shades;

less from its primitive appearance, as they are more or less numerous or powerful than those, which acted upon the frame of man in the first seat of his habitation.

With respect to the Divine interposition, two epochs have been assigned, when this difference of colour has been imagined to have been fo produced. The first is that, which has been related, when the curse was pronounced on a branch of the posterity of Ham. But this argument has been already refuted; for if the particular colour alluded to were assigned at this period, it was affigned to the descendants of Canaan, to distinguish them from those of his other brothers, and was therefore limited to the former. But the descendants of \* Cush, as we have shewn before, partook of the same colour; a clear proof, that it was neither assigned to them on this occafion, nor at this period.

The fecond epoch is that, when mankind were difperfed on the building of Babel. It has been thought, that both national features and colour might probably have been given them at this time, because these would have affifted the confusion of language, by causing them to disperse into tribes, and would have united more firmly the individuals of each, after the dispersion had taken place. But this is improbable: first, because there is great reason to presume that Moses, who has mentioned the confusion of language, would have mentioned these circumstances also, if they had actually contributed to bring about fo fingular an event: fecondly, because the confusion of language was sufficient of itself to have accomplished this; and we cannot suppose that the Deity . could have done any thing in vain: and thirdly, because, if mankind had been dispersed, each tribe in its peculiar hue, it is impossible to conceive, that they could have wandered and fettled in fuch a manner, as to exhibit that regular gradation of colour from the equator to the poles, so conspicuous at the present day.

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<sup>\*</sup> See note, p. 115. To this we may add, that the rest of the descendants of Ham, as far as they can be traced, are now also black, as well as many of the descendants of Shem.

These are the only periods, which there has been even the shadow of a probability for assigning; and we may therefore conclude that the preceding observations, together with such circumstances as will appear in the present chapter, will amount to a demonstration, that the difference of colour was never caused by any interposition of the Deity, and that it must have proceeded therefore from that incidental co-operation of causes, which has been before related.

What these causes are, it is out of the power of human wisdom positively to affert: there are facts, however, which, if properly weighed and put together, will throw considerable light upon the subject. These we shall submit to the perusal of the reader, and shall deduce from them such inferences only, as almost every person must make in his own mind, on their recital.

The first point, that occurs to be ascertained, is, "What part of the skin is the seat of colour?" The old anatomists usually divided the skin into two parts, or lamina; the exterior and thinnest: called by the Greeks Epidermis, by the Romans Cuticula, and hence by us Cuticle; and the interiour, called by the former Derma, and by the latter Cutis or true skin. Hence they must necessarily have supposed, that, as the true skin was in every respect the same in all human subjects, however various their external hue, so the seat of colour must have existed in the Cuticle, or upper surface.

Malphigi, an eminent Italian physician, of the last century, was the first person who discovered that the skin was divided into three lamina, or parts; the Cuticle, the true skin, and a certain coagulated substance situated between both, which he distinguished by the title of Mucosum Corpus; a title retained by anatomists to the present day: which coagulated substance adhered so firmly to the Cuticle as, in all former anatomical preparations, to have come off with it, and, from this circumstance, to have led the ancient anatomists to believe, that there were but two lamina, or divisible portions in the human skin.

This discovery was sufficient to ascertain the point in question: for it appeared asterwards that the Cuticle,

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when divided according to this discovery from the other lamina, was semi-transparent; that the cuticle of the blackest negroe was of the same transparency and colour, as that of the purest white; and hence, the true skins of both being invariably the same, that the mucosum corpus was the seat of colour.

This has been farther confirmed by all subsequent anatomical experiments, by which it appears, that, whatever is the colour of this intermediate coagulated substance, nearly the same is the apparent colour of the upper surface of the skin. Neither can it be otherwise; for the Cuticle, from its transparency, must necessarily transmit the colour of the substance beneath it, in the fame manner, though not in the fame degree, as the cornea transmits the colour of the iris of the eye. This transparency is a matter of ocular demonstration in white people. It is conspicuous in every blush; for no one can imagine, that the cuticle becomes red, as often as this happens: nor is it less discoverable in the veins, which are so easy to be discerned; for no one can suppose, that the blue streaks, which he constantly sees in the fairest complexions, are painted, as it were, on the surface of the upper skin. From these, and a variety of other \* observations, no maxim is more true in phyfiology, than that on the mucofum corpus depends the colour of the human body; or, in other words, that the mucosum corpus being of a different colour in different inhabitants of the globe, and appearing through the cuticle or upper furface of the skin, gives them that various appearance, which strikes us so forcibly in contemplating the human race.

As this can be incontrovertibly ascertained, it is evident,

<sup>\*</sup> Diseases have a great effect upon the mucosum corpus, but particularly the jaundice, which turns it yellow. Hence, being transmitted through the cuticle, the yellow appearance of the whole body.---But this, even as a matter of ocular demonstration, is not confined solely to white people; negroes themselves, while affected with these or other disorders, changing their black colour for that which the disease has conveyed to the mucous substance.

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dent, that whatever causes co-operate in producing this different appearance, they produce it by acting upon the mucosum corpus, which, from the almost incredible manner in which the \* cuticle is perforated, is as accessible as the cuticle itself. These causes are probably those various qualities of things, which, combined with the influence of the sun, contribute to form what we call elimate. For when any person considers, that the mucous substance before-mentioned, is found to vary in its colour, as the climates vary from the equator to the poles, his mind must be instantly struck with the hypothesis, and he must adopt it without any hesitation, as the genuine cause of the phænomenon.

This fact, + of the variation of the mucous substance according to the fituation of the place, has been clearly afcertained in the numerous anatomical experiments that have been made; in which, subjects of all nations have come under consideration. The natives of many of the kingdoms and Isles of Asia, are found to have their corpus mucosum black. Those of Africa, situated near the line, of the same colour. Those of the maritime parts of the fame continent, of a dusky brown, nearly approaching to it; and the colour becomes lighter or darker in proportion as the distance from the equator is either greater or less. The Europeans are the fairest inhabitants of the world. Those situated in the most southern regions of Europe, have in their corpus mucosum a tinge of the dark hue of their African neighbours: hence the epidemick complexion, prevalent among them, is nearly of the colour of the pickled Spanish olive; while in this country, and those situated nearer the north pole, it appears to be nearly, if not absolutely, white.

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<sup>\*</sup> The cutaneous pores are so excessively small, that one grain of fand, (according to Dr. Lewenhoeck's calculations) would cover many hundreds of them.

<sup>†</sup> We do not mean to infinuate that the fame people have their corpus mucosum sensibly vary, as often as they go into another latitude, but that the fact is true only of different people, who have been long established in different latitudes.

These are \* facts, which anatomy has established; and we acknowledge them to be such, that we cannot divest ourselves of the idea, that climate has a considerable share in producing a difference of colour. Others, we know, have invented other hypothesis, but all of them have been instantly resuted, as unable to explain the dissipulties for which they were advanced, and as absolutely contrary to fact: and the inventors themselves have been obliged, almost as soon as they have proposed them, to acknowledge them desciont.

The only objection of any consequence, that has ever been made to the hypothesis of climate, is this, that people under the same parallets are not exactly of the same colour. But this is no objection in fact: for it does not follow that those countries, which are at an equal distance from the equator, should have their climates the same. Indeed nothing is more contrary to experience than this. Climate depends upon a variety of accidents. High mountains, in the neighbourhood of a place, make it cooler, by chilling the air that is carried over them by the winds. Large spreading succulent plants, if among the productions of the soil, have the same effect: they afford agreeable cooling shades, and a moist atmosphere from their continual exhalations, by which the ardour of the fun is confiderably abated. While the foil, on the other hand, if of a fandy nature, retains the heat in an uncommon degree, and makes the fummers confiderably hotter than those which are found to exist in the fame latitude, where the soil is different. To this proximity of what may be termed burning sands, and to the fulphurous and metallick particles, which are continual, ly exhaling from the bowels of the earth, is ascribed the different degree of blackness, by which some African nations are distinguishable from each other, though under the same parallels. To these observations, we may adď,

<sup>\*</sup> We beg leave to return our thanks here to a gentleman, eminent in the medical line, who furnished us with the above-mentioned facts.

add, that though the inhabitants of the same parallel are not exactly of the same hue, yet they differ only by shades of the same colour; or, to speak with more precision, that there are no two people, in such a situation, one of whom is white, and the other black. To fum up the whole—Suppose we were to take a common globe; to begin at the equator; to paint every country along the meridian line in succession from thence to the poles; and to paint them with the same colour which prevails in the respective inhabitants of each, we should see the black, with which we had been obliged to begin, infenfibly changing to an olive, and the olive, through as many intermediate colours, to a white: and if, on the other hand, we should complete any one of the parallels according to the same plan, we should see a difference perhaps in the appearance of some of the countries through which it ran, though the difference would confift wholly in shades of the same colour.

The argument therefore, which is brought against the hypothesis, is so far from being an objection, that we shall consider it as one of the first arguments in its favour: for if climate has really an influence on the mucous substance of the body, it is evident, that we must not only expect to see a gradation of colour in the inhabitants from the equator to the poles, but also \* different shades of the same colour in the inhabitants of the

same parallel.

To this argument, we shall add one that is incontrovertible, which is, that when the black inhabitants of Africa are transplanted to colder, or the white inhabitants of Europe to hotter climates, their children, born there,

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<sup>\*</sup> Suppose we were to see two nations, contiguous to eath other, of black and white inhabitants in the same parallel, even this would be no objection, for many circumstances are to be considered. A black people may have wandered into a white, and a white people into a black latitude, and they may not have been settled there a sufficient length of time for such a change to have been accomplished in their complexion, as that they should be like the old established inhabitants of the parallel, into which they have lately come.

are of a different colour from themselves; that is, lighter in the first, and darker in the second instance.

As a proof of the first, we shall give the words of the Abbé Raynal, in his admired publication. \* "The children," says he, "which they, (the Africans) procreate in America, are not so black as their parents were. After each generation the difference becomes

of more palpable. It is possible, that after a numerous

fuccession of generations, the men come from Africa would not be distinguished from those of the country,

" into which they may have been transplanted."

This circumstance we have had the pleasure of hearing confirmed by a variety of persons, who have been witnesses of the fact; but particularly by many † intelligent Africans, who have been parents themselves in America, and who have declared that the difference is so palpable in the northern provinces, that not only they themselves have constantly observed it, but that they have heard it observed by others.

Neither is this variation in the children from the colour of their parents improbable. The children of the blackest Africans are † born white. In this state they continue for about a month, when they change to a pale yellow. In process of time they become brown. Their skin still continues to increase in darkness with their age, till it becomes of a dirty, sallow black, and at length, after a certain period of years, glossy and shining. Now, if climate has any influence on the mucous substance of

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<sup>\*</sup> Justamond's Abbé Raynal, v. 5. p. 193.

<sup>†</sup> The author of this Essay made it his business to inquire of the most intelligent of those, whom he could meet with in London, as to the authenticity of the fact. All those from America assured him that it was strictly true; those from the West-Indies, that they had never observed it there; but that they had found a sensible difference in themselves since they came to England.

<sup>†</sup> This circumstance, which always happens, shews that they are descended from the same parents as ourselves; for had they been a distinct species of men, and the blackness entirely ingrasted in their constitution and frame, there is great reason to presume, that their children would have been born black.

the body, this variation in the children from the colour of their parents is an event, which must be reasonably expected: for being born white, and not having equally powerful causes to act upon them in colder, as their parents had in the hotter climates which they left, it must necessarily follow, that the same effect cannot possibly be produced.

Hence also, if the hypothesis be admitted, may be deduced the reason, why even those children, who have been brought from their country at an early age into colder regions, have been \* observed to be of a lighter colour than those who have remained at home till they arrived at a state of manhood. For having undergone fome of the changes which we mentioned to have attended their countrymen from infancy to a certain age, and having been taken away before the rest could be completed, these farther changes, which would have taken place had they remained at home, feem either to have been checked in their progress, or weakened in their degree, by a colder climate.

We come now to the second and opposite case; for a proof of which we shall appeal to the words of Dr. Mitchell, in the Philosophical Transactions. + " The Spani-" ards who have inhabited America under the torrid zone " for any time, are become as dark coloured as our na-"tive Indians of Virginia, of which, I myfelf have been " a witness; and were they not to intermarry with the

" Europeans, but lead the fame rude and barbarous lives " with the Indians, it is very probable that, in a succes-" fion of many generations, they would become as dark

" in complexion."

To this instance we shall add one, which is mentioned by a ! late writer, who describing the African coast, and the

<sup>\*</sup> This observation was communicated to us by the gentleman in the medical line, to whom we returned our thanks for certain anatomical facts.

<sup>†</sup> Philof. Trans. No. 476. fect. 4.

<sup>‡</sup> Treatise upon the Trade from Great Britain to Africa, by an African merchant.

the European fettlements there, has the following passage. "There are several other small Portuguese settlements, and one of some note at Mitomba, a river in Sierra " Leon. The people here called Portuguese, are princi-" pally persons bred from a mixture of the first Portu-" guese discoverers with the natives, and now become, in their complexion and woolly quality of their hair, per-" feet negroes, retaining however a smattering of the Portuguese language."

These facts, with respect to the colonists of the Europeans, are of the highest importance in the present case, and deserve a serious attention. For when we know to a certainty from whom they are descended; when we know that they were, at the time of their transplantation, of the same colour as those from whom they severally forung; and when, on the other hand, we are credibly informed, that they have changed it for the native colour of the place which they now inhabit; the evidence in support of these facts is as great, as if a person, on the removal of two or three families into another climate, had determined to afcertan the circumstance; as if he had gone with them and watched their children; as if he had communicated his observations at his death to a fuccesfor; as if his successor had prosecuted the plan, and thus an uninterrupted chain of evidence had been kept up from their first removal to any determined period of succeeding time.

But though these facts seem sufficient of themselves to confirm our opinion, they are not the only facts which can be adduced in its support. It can be shewn, that the members of the very fame family, when divided from each other, and removed into different countries, have not only changed their family complexion, but that they have changed it to as many different colours as they have gone into different regions of the world. We cannot have, perhaps, a more striking instance of this, than in the Jews. These people are scattered over the face of the whole earth. They have preserved themfelves distinct from the rest of the world by their religion; and, as they never intermarry with any but those of their

their own fect, so they have no mixture of blood in their veins, that they should differ from each other: and yet nothing is more true, than that the \* English Jew is white, the Portuguese swarthy, the Armenian olive, and the Arabian copper; in short, that there appear to be as many different species of Jews, as there are countries in which they reside.

To these facts we shall add the following observation, that if we can give credit to the ancient historians in general, a change from the darkest black to the purest white must have actually been accomplished. One instance, perhaps, may be thought sufficient. † Herodotus relates, that the Colchi were black, and that they had criped hair. These people were a detachment of the Athiopian army under Sejostrir, who followed him in his expedition, and settled in that part of the world, where Colchis is usually represented to have been situated. Had not the same author informed us of this circumstance, we should have thought it † strange, that a people of this description should have been found in such a latitude. Now, as they were undoubtedly fettled there, and as they were neither fo totally destroyed, nor made any fuch rapid conquests, as that history should notice the event, there is great reason to presume, that their descendants continued in the same, or settled in the adjacent country; from whence it will follow, that they must have changed their complexion to that, which is observable in the inhabitants of this particular region at the present day; or, in other words, that the black inbabitant

<sup>\*</sup> We mean such only as are natives of the countries which we mention, and whose ancestors have been settled there for a certain period of time.

<sup>†</sup> Herodotus. Euterpe. p. 80. Editio Stephani, printed 1570.

† This circumfance confirms what we faid in a former note, p. 126, that even if two nations were to be found in the fame parallel, one of whom was black, and the other white, it would form no objection against the hypothesis of climate, as one of them might have been new settlers from a distant country.

habitant of Colchis must have been changed into the \* fair Circassian.

As we have now shewn it to be highly probable, from the facts which have been advanced, that climate is the cause of the difference of colour which prevails in the different inhabitants of the globe, we shall now shew its probability from so similar an effect produced on the mucous substance before-mentioned by so similar a cause, that though the fact does not absolutely prove our conjecture to be right, yet it will give us a very lively conception of the manner, in which the phænomenon may be caused.

This probability may be shewn in the case of freckles, which are to be seen in the face of children, but of such only, as have the thinnest and most transparent skins, and are occasioned by the rays of the sun, striking forcibly on the mucous substance of the face, and drying the accumulating shuid. This accumulating shuid, or perspirable matter, is at first colourless; but being exposed to violent heat, or dried, becomes brown. Hence, the mucosum corpus being tinged in various parts by this brown coagulated shuid, and the parts so tinged appearing through the cuticle, or upper surface of the skin, arises that spotted appearance, observable in the case recited.

Now, if we were to conceive a black skin to be an universal freckle, or the rays of the sun to act so universally on the mucous substance of a person's sace, as to produce these spots so contiguous to each other that they should unite, we should then see, in imagination, a sace similar to those, which are daily to be seen among black people: and if we were to conceive his body to be exposed

<sup>\*</sup>Suppose, without the knowledge of any historian, they had made such considerable conquests, as to have settled themselves at the distance of 1000 miles in any one direction from Colchis, still they must have changed their colour. For had they gone in an Eastern or Western direction, they must have been of the same colour as the Circassians; if to the north, whiter; if to the south, of a copper. There are no people within that distance of Colchis, who are black.

posed or acted upon in the same manner, we should then see his body assuming a similar appearance; and thus we should see the whole man of a perfect black, or resembling one of the naked inhabitants of the torrid zone. Now as the seat of freckles and of blackness is the same; as their appearance is similar; and as the cause of the sirst is the ardour of the sun, it is therefore probable that the cause of the second is the same: hence, if we substitute for the word "sun," what is analogous to it, the word climate, the same effect may be supposed to be produced, and the conjecture to receive a fanction.

Nor is it unlikely that the hypothesis, which considers the cause of freckles and of blackness as the same, may be right. For if blackness is occasioned by the rays of the sun striking forcibly and universally on the mucous substance of the body, and drying the accumulating sluid, we can account for the different degrees of it to be found in the different inhabitants of the globe. For as the quantity of perspirable sluid, and the force of the solar rays is successively increased, as the climates are successively warmer, from any given parallel to the line, it follows that the sluid, with which the mucous substance will be stained, will be successively thicker and deeper coloured; and hence, as it appears through the cuticle, the complexion successively darker; or, what amounts to the same thing, there will be a difference of colour in the inhabitants of every successive parallel.

From these, and the whole of the preceding observations on the subject, we may conclude, that as all the inhabitants of the earth cannot be otherwise than the children of the same parents, and as the difference of their appearance must have of course proceeded from incidental causes, these causes are a combination of those qualities, which we call climate; that the blackness of the Africans is so far ingrasted in their constitution, in a course of many generations, that their children wholly inherit it, if brought up in the same spot, but that it is not so absolutely interwoven in their nature, that it cannot be removed, if they are born and settled in another; that Noah and his sons were probably of an alive com-

plexion; that those of their decendants, who went farther to the south, became of a deeper olive or copper; while those, who went still farther, became of a deeper copper or black; that those, on the other hand, who travelled farther to the north, became less olive or brown, while those who went still farther than the former, became less brown or white; and that if any man were to point out any one of the colours which prevails in the human complexion, as likely to furnish an argument, that the people of such a complexion were of a different species from the rest, it is probable that his own descendants, if removed to the climate to which this complexion is peculiar, would, in the course of a few generations, degenerate into the same colour.

Having now replied to the argument, "that the Africans" are an inferiour link of the chain of nature," as far as it depended on their capacity and colour, we shall now only take notice of an expression, which the receivers before-mentioned are pleased to make use of, "that they

" are made for flavery."

Had the Africans been made for flavery, or to become the property of any fociety of men, it is clear, from the observations that have been made in the second part of this Eslay, that they must have been created devoid of reason: but this is contrary to fact. It is clear also, that there must have been many and evident signs of the inferiority of their nature, and that this society of men must have had a natural right to their dominion: but this is equally salse. No such signs of inferiority are to be found in the one, and the right to dominion in the other is incidental: for in what volume of nature or religion is it written, that one society of men should breed slaves for the benefit of another? Nor is it less evident that they would have wanted many of those qualities which they have, and which brutes have not: they would have wanted that spirit of liberty, that \* sense of ignominy and shame,

<sup>\*</sup> There are a particular people among those transported from Africa to the colonies, who immediately on receiving punishment, destroy themselves. This is a fact which the receivers are unable to contradict.

shame, which so frequently drives them to the horrid extremity of finishing their own existence. Nor would they have been endowed with a contemplative power; for fuch a power would have been unnecessary to people in fuch a fituation; or rather, its only use could have been to increase their pain. We cannot suppose therefore that God has made an order of beings, with such mental qualities and powers, for the fole purpose of being used as beasts, or instruments of labour. And here, what a dreadful argument presents itself against you receivers? For if they have no understandings as you confess, then is your conduct impious, because, as they cannot perceive the intention of your punishment, your severities cannot make them better. But if, on the other hand, they have had understandings, (which has evidently appeared) then is your conduct equally impious, who, by destroying their faculties by the severity of your discipline, have reduced men, who had once the power of reason, to an equality with the brute creation.

#### C H A P. IX.

The reader may perhaps think, that the receivers have by this time expended all their arguments, but their store is not so easily exhausted. They are well aware that justice, nature, and religion, will continue, as they have ever uniformly done, to oppose their conduct.—This has driven them to exert their ingenuity, and has occasioned that multiplicity of arguments to be found in the present question.

These arguments are of a different complexion from the former. They consist in comparing the state of states with that of some of the classes of free men, and in certain scenes of felicity, which the former are said

to enjoy.

It is affirmed that the punishments which the Africans undergo, are less severe than the military; that their life is happier than that of the English peasant; that they have the advantages of manumission; that they have

their

their little spots of ground, their holy-days, their dances; in short, that their life is a scene of festivity and mirth, and that they are much happier in the colonies than in their own country.

These representations, which have been made out with much ingenuity and art, may have had their weight with the unwary; but they will never pass with men of consideration and sense, who are accustomed to estimate the probability of things, before they admit them to be true. Indeed the bare affertion, that their situation is even comfortable, contains its own resutation, or at least leads us to suspect that the person, who afferted it, has omitted some important considerations in the account. Such we shall shew to have been actually the case, and that the representations of the receivers when stripped of their glossy ornaments, are but empty declamation.

It is faid, first, of military punishments, that they are more severe than those which the Africans undergo.—But this is a bare affertion without a proof. It is not shewn even by those, who affert it, how the fact can be made out. We are lest therefore to draw the comparison ourselves, and to fill up those important considerations, which we have just said that the receivers had omitted.

That military punishments are severe we confess, but we deny that they are severer than those with which they are compared. Where is the military man, whose ears have been slit, whose limbs have been mutilated, or whose eyes have been beaten out? But let us even allow, that their punishments are equal in the degree of their severity: still they must lose by comparison. The soldier is never punished but after a fair and equitable trial, and the decision of a military court; the unhappy African, at the discretion of his Lord. The one \* knows what particular conduct will constitute an offence; the other

<sup>\*</sup> The articles of war are frequently read at the head of every regiment in the fervice, stating those particular actions which are to be considered as crimes.

has no fuch information, as he is wholly at the disposal of passion and caprice, which may impose upon any action, however laudable, the appellation of a crime. The former has it of course in his power to avoid a punishment; the latter is never safe. The former is punished for a real, the latter, often, for an imaginary sault.

Now will any person affert, on comparing the whole of those circumstances together, which relate to their respective punishments, that there can be any doubt, which of the two are in the worst situation, as to their

penal fystems?

With respect to the declaration, that the life of an African in the colonies is happier than that of an English peasant, it is equally false. Indeed we can scarcely withhold our indignation, when we consider, how shamefully the situation of this latter class of men has been misrepresented, to elevate the former to a state of sictitious happiness. If the representations of the receivers be true, it is evident that those of the most approved writers, who have placed a considerable share of happiness in the cottage, have been mistaken in their opinion; and that those of the rich, who have been heard to sigh, and envy the selicity of the peasant, have been treacherous to their own sensations.

But which are we to believe on the occasion? Those, who endeavour to dress vice in the habit of virtue, or those, who derive their opinion from their own feelings? The latter are furely to be believed; and we may conclude therefore, that the horrid picture which is given of the life of the peasant, has not so just a foundation as the receivers would lead us to suppose. For has he no pleasure in the thought, that he lives in his own country, and among his relations and friends? That he is actually free, and that his children will be the same? That he can never be fold as a beast? That he can speak his mind without the fear of the lash? That he cannot even be struck with impunity? And that he partakes, equally with his superiours, of the protection of the law?—Now, there is no one of these advantages which the African possesses, and no one, which the defenders of slavery take into their account.

Of the other comparisons that are usually made, we may observe in general, that, as they consist in comparing the iniquitous practice of flavery with other iniquitous practices in force among other nations, they can neither raise it to the appearance of virtue, nor extenuate its guilt. The things compared are in these instances both of them evils alike. They call equally for redress, and are equally disgraceful to the \* governments which suffer them, if not encourage them, to exist. To attempt therefore to justify one species of iniquity, by comparing it with another, is no justification at all; and is so far from answering the purpose, for which the comparison is intended, as to give us reason to suspect, that the comparer has but little notion either of equity or honour.

We come now to those scenes of selicity, which slaves are said to enjoy. The first advantage which they are said to experience, is that of manumission. But here the advocates for slavery conceal an important circumstance. They expatiate indeed on the charms of freedom, and contend that it, must be a blessing in the eyes of those, whom whom it is conferred. We perfectly agree with a min this particular. But they do not tell us that these advantages are confined; that they are confined to some favourite domestick; that not one in an hundred enjoy them; and that they are never extended to those, who are employed in the cultivation of the field, as long as they can work. These are they, who are most to be pitied, who are destined to perpetual drudgery; and of whom no one whatever has a chance of being freed from

<sup>\*</sup> We cannot omit here to mention one of the customs, which has been often brought as a palliation of flavery, and which prevailed but a little time ago, and we are doubtful whether it does not prevail now, in the metropolis of this country, of kidnapping men for the fervice of the East-India Company Every subject, as long as he behaves well, has a right to the protection of government; and the tacit permission of such a scene of iniquity, when it becomes known, is as much a breach of duty in government, as the conduct of those subjects, who, on other occasions, would be termed, and punished as, rebellious.

his fituation, till death either releases him at once, or age renders him incapable of continuing his former labour. And here let it be remarked, to the disgrace of the receivers, that he is then made free, not—as a reward for his past services, but, as his labour is then of little or no value,—to save the \* tax.

With the same artifice is mention also made of the little spots, or gardens, as they are called, which slaves are faid to possess from the liberality of the receivers. But people must not be led away by agreeable and pleasant founds. They must not suppose that these gardens are made for flowers; or that they are places of amusement, in which they can spend their time in botanical researches and delights. Alas, they do not furnish them with a theme for fuch pleasing pursuits and speculations! They must be cultivated in those hours, which ought to be appropriated to + rest; and they must be cultivated, not for an amusement, but to make up, if it be possible, the great deficiency in their weekly allowance of provisions. Hence it appears, that the receivers have no merit whatever in such an appropriation of land to their unfortunate flaves: for they are either under the necessity of doing this, or of losing them by the jaws of famine. And it is a notorious fact, that, with their weekly allowance, and the produce of their spots together, it is often with the greatest difficulty that they preserve a wretched existence.

The third advantage which they are faid to experience, is that of holy-days, or days of respite from their usual discipline and fatigue. This is certainly a great indulgence,

† They must be cultivated always on a Sunday, and frequently in those hours which should be appropriated to steep, or the wretched possessors must be inevitably starved.

<sup>\*</sup> The expences of every parish are defrayed by a poll-tax on negroes, to save which they pretend to liberate those who are past labour; but they still keep them employed in repairing fences, or in doing some trifling work on a scanty allowance. For to free a field-negroe, so long as he can work, is a maxim, which, notwithstanding the numerous boasted manumissions, no master ever thinks of adopting in the colonies.

gence, and ought to be recorded to the immortal honour of the receivers. We wish we could express their liberality in those handsome terms, in which it deserves to be represented, or applaud them sufficiently for deviating for once from the rigours of servile discipline. But we confess, that we are unequal to the task, and must therefore content ourselves with observing, that while the horse has one day in seven to refresh his limbs, the happy African has but one in \* fifty-two, as a relaxation from his labours.

With respect to their dances, on which such a particular stress has been generally laid, we fear that people may have been as shamefully deceived, as in the former instances. For from the manner in which these are generally mentioned, we should almost be led to imagine, that they had certain hours allowed them for the purpose of joining in the dance, and that they had every comfort and convenience, that people are generally supposed to enjoy on such convivial occasions. But this is far from the case. Reason informs us, that it can never be. If they wish for such innocent recreations, they must enjoy them in the time that is allotted them for sleep; and so far are these dances from proceeding from any uncommon degree of happiness, which excites them to convivial fociety, that they proceed rather from an uncommon depression of spirits, which makes them even sacrifice their + rest, for the sake of experiencing for a moment a more

† These dances are usually in the middle of the night; and so defirous are these unfortunate people of obtaining but a joyful hour, that they not only often give up their sleep, but add to the labours of the day, by going several miles to obtain it.

<sup>\*</sup> They are allowed in general three holy-days at Christmas, but in Jamacia they have two also at Easter, and two at Whitsuntide: so that on the largest scale, they have only seven days in a year, or one day in fifty-two. But this is on a supposition, that the receivers do not break in upon the afternoons, which they are frequently too apt to do. If it should be said that Sunday is an holy-day, it is not true; it is so far an holy-day, that they do not work for their masters; but such an holy-day, that if they do not employ it in the cultivation of their little spots, they must be starved.

a more joyful oblivion of their cares. For suppose any one of the receivers, in the middle of a dance, were to address his slaves in the following manner: " Africans! " I begin at last to feel for your situation; and my con-" science is severely hurt, whenever I reslect that I have " been reducing those to a state of misery and pain. "who have never given me offence. You feem to be " fond of these exercises, but yet you are obliged to take them at such unseasonable hours, that they im-66 pair your health, which is fufficiently broken by the " intolerable share of labour which I have hitherto im-" posed upon you, I will therefore make you a proposal. "Will you be content to live in the colonies, and you " shall have the half of every week entirely to your-" felves? or will you choose to return to your miserable, " wretched country?" --- But what is that which strikes their ears? Which makes them motionless in an instant? Which interrupts the festive scene? their country? --- transporting found!---Behold! they are now flying from the dance: you may fee them running to the shore and, frantick as it were with joy, demanding with open arms an instantaneous passage to their beloved native plains.

Such are the colonial delights, by the representation of which the receivers would persuade us, that the Africans are taken from their country to a region of conviviality and mirth; and that like those, who leave their usual places of residence for a summer's amusement, they are conveyed to the colonies—to bathe,—to dance,—to keep holy-day,—to be jovial.—But there is something so truly ridiculous in the attempt to impose these scenes of felicity on the publick, as scenes which fall to the lot of slaves, that the receivers must have been driven to great extremities, to hazard them to the eye of censure.

The last point that remains to be considered, is the shameful assertion, that the Africans are much happier in the colonies, than in their own country. But in what does this superiour happiness consist? In those real scenes, it must be replied, which have been just mentioned; for these, by the confession of the receivers, constitute the

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happiness they enjoy.—But it has been shewn that these have been unfairly represented; and, were they realized in the most extensive latitude, they would not confirm the fact. For if, upon a recapitulation, it consists in the pleasure of manumission, they surely must have passed their lives in a much more comfortable manner, who like the Africans at home, have had no occasion for such a benefit at all. But the receivers, we presume, reason upon this principle, that we never know the value of a bleffing but by its lofs. This is generally true: but would any one of them make himself a slave for years, that he might run the chance of the pleasures of manumission? Or that he might taste the charms of liberty with a greater relish? Nor is the affertion less false in every other confideration. For if their happiness confists in the few boly-days, which in the colonies they are permitted to enjoy, what mult be their fituation in their own country, where the whole year is but one continued holy-day, or ceffation from discipline and satigue?—If in the possession of a mean and contracted spot, what must be their situation, where a whole region is their own, producing almost spontaneously the comforts of life, and requiring for its cultivation none of those hours, which should be appropriated to fleep?—If in the pleasures of the colonial dance, what must it be in their own country, where they may dance for ever; where there is no stated hour to interrupt their felicity, no intolerable labour immediately to fucceed their recreations, and no overfeer to receive them under the discipline of the lash?—If these therefore are the only circumstances, by which the affertion can be proved, we may venture to fay, without fear of oppofition, that it can never be proved at all.

But these are not the only circumstances. It is said that they are barbarous at home.—But do you receivers civilize them?—Your unwillingness to convert them to Christianity, because you suppose you must use them more kindly when converted, is but a bad argument in favour of the sact.

It is affirmed again, that their manner of life, and their fituation is fuch in their own country, that to fay they they are happy is a jest. " \* But who are you, who " pretend to judge of another man's happiness? That " state which each man, under the guidance of his Maker, forms for himself, and not one man for another? "To know what constitutes mine or your happiness, is " the fole prerogative of him who created us, and cast " us in fo various and different moulds. Did your flaves ever complain to you of their unhappiness, amidst their native woods and desarts? Or, rather, let me 44 ask, did they ever cease complaining of their condition " under you their lordly masters? Where they see, in-46 deed, the accommodations of civil life, but fee them all se pass to others, themselves unbenefited by them. Be " fo gracious then, ye petty tyrants over human free-"dom, to let your flaves judge for themselves, what it is which makes their own happiness, and then see " whether they do not place it in the return to their own " country, rather than in the contemplation of your " grandeur, of which their mifery makes fo large a " part."

But fince you speak with so much considence on the subject, let us ask you receivers again, if you have ever been informed by your unfortunate slaves, that they had no connexions in the country from which they have forcibly been torn away: or, if you will take upon you to affert, that they never sigh, when they are alone; or that they never relate to each other their tales of misery and woe. But you judge of them, perhaps, in an happy moment, when you are dealing out to them their provisions for the week; and are but little aware, that, though the countenance may be cheered with a momentary smile, the heart may be exquisitely tortured. Were you to shew us, indeed, that there are laws, subject to no evasion, by which you are obliged to clothe and feed them in a comfortable manner; were you to shew us

<sup>\*</sup> Bishop of Gloucester's sermon, preached before the society for the propagation of the gospel, at the anniversary meeting, on the 21st of February, 1766.

that they are \* protected at all; or that even one in a thousand of those masters have † suffered death, who have been guilty of premeditated murder to their slaves, you would have a better claim to our belief: but you can neither produce the instances nor the laws. The people, of whom you speak, are slaves, are your own property, are wholly at your own disposal; and this idea is sufficient to overturn your affertions of their happiness.

But we shall now mention a circumstance, which, in the present case, will have more weight than all the arguments which have hitherto been advanced. It is an opinion, which the Africans universally entertain, that, as foon as death shall release them from the hands of their oppressors, they shall immediately be wasted back to their native plains, there to exist again, to enjoy the fight of their beloved countrymen, and to spend the whole of their new existence in scenes of tranquillity and delight: and fo powerfully does this notion operate upon them, as to drive them frequently to the horrid extremity of putting a period to their lives. Now if these suicides are frequent, (which no person can deny) what are they but a proof, that the situation of those who destroy themselves must have been insupportably wretched: and if the thought of returning to their country after death, when they have experienced the colonial joys, constitutes their supreme felicity, what are they but a proof, that they think there is as much difference be-tween the two fituations, as there is between milery and delight?

Nor

Paves was a crime.

<sup>\*</sup> There is a law, (but let the reader remark, that it prevails but in one of the colonies,) against mutilation. It took its rise from the frequency of the inhuman practice. But though a master cannot there chop off the limb of a slave with an axe, he may yet work, starve, and beat him to death with impunity.

<sup>†</sup> Two instances are recorded by the receivers, out of about fifty-thousand, where a white man has suffered death for the murder of a negroe; but the receivers do not tell us, that these suffered more because they were the pests of society, than because the murder of

Nor is the affertion of the receivers less liable to a refutation in the instance of those, who terminate their own existence, than of those, whom nature releases from their persecutions. They die with a smile upon their face, and their funerals are attended by a vast concourse of their countrymen, with every possible \* demonstration of joy. But why this unusual mirth, if their departed brother has lest an happy place? Or if he has been taken from the care of an indulgent master, who consulted his pleasures, and administered to his wants? But alas, it arises from hence, that he has gone to his happy country: a circumstance, sufficient of itself, to silence a myriad of those specious arguments, which the imagination has been racked, and will always be racked to produce, in favour of a system of tyranny and oppression.

It remains only, that we should now conclude the chapter with a fact, which will shew that the account, which we have given of the situation of slaves, is strictly true, and will refute at the same time all the arguments which have hitherto been, and may yet be brought by the receivers, to prove that their treatment is humane. In one of the western colonies of the Europeans, † six hundred and sifty thousand slaves were imported within an hundred years; at the expiration of which time, their whole posterity were found to amount to one hundred and forty thousand. This sact will ascertain the treatment of itself. For how shamefully must these unfortunate people have been oppressed? What a dreadful havock must famine, satigue, and cruelty, have made among them, when we consider, that the descendants

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<sup>\*</sup> A negroe-funeral is confidered as a curious fight, and is attended with finging, dancing, musick, and every circumstance that can shew the attendants to be happy on the occasion.

<sup>†</sup> In 96 years, ending in 1774, 800,000 flaves had been imported into the French port of St. Domingo, of which there remained only 290,000 in 1774. Of this last number only 140,000 were creoles, or natives of the island, i. e. of 650,000 flaves, the whole posterity were 140,000. Considerations fur la Colonie de St. Domingue, published by authority in 1777.

of fix hundred and fifty thousand people in the prime of life, gradually imported within a century, are less numerous than those, which only \* ten thousand would have produced in the same period, under common advantages, and in a country congenial to their constitutions?

But the receivers have probably great merit on the occasion. Let us therefore set it down to their humanity. Let us suppose for once, that this incredible waste of the human species proceeds from a benevolent design; that, sensible of the miseries of a servile state, they resolve to wear out, as fast as they possibly can, their unfortunate slaves, that their miseries may the sooner end, and that a wretched posterity may be prevented from sharing their parental condition. Now, whether this is the plan of reasoning which the receivers adopt, we cannot take upon us to decide; but true it is, that the effect produced is exactly the same, as if they had reasoned wholly on this benevolent principle.

### CHAP. X.

We have now taken a survey of the treatment which the unfortunate Africans undergo, when they are put into the hands of the receivers. This treatment, by the four first chapters of the present part of this Essay, appears to be wholly insupportable, and to be such as no human being can apply to another, without the imputation of such crimes, as should make him tremble.—But as many arguments are usually advanced by those

<sup>\*</sup> Ten thousand people under fair advantages, and in a soil congenial to their constitutions, and where the means of subsistence are easy, should produce in a century 160,000. This is the proportion in which the Americans increased: and the Africans in their own country increase in the same, if not in a greater proportion. Now as the climate of the colonies is as favourable to their health as that of their own country, the causes of the prodigious decrease in the one, and increase in the other, will be more conspicuous-

who have any interest in the practice, by which they would either exculpate the treatment, or diminish its feverity, we allotted the remaining chapters for their discussion. In these we considered the probability of fuch a treatment against the motives of interest; the credit that was to be given to those difinterested writers on the subject, who have recorded particular instances of barbarity; the inferiority of the Africans to the human species; the comparisons that are generally made with respect to their situation; the positive scenes of felicity which they are faid to enjoy, and every other argument, in short, that we have found to have ever been advanced in the defence of flavery. These have been all confidered, and we may venture to pronounce, that, instead of answering the purpose for which they were intended, they serve only to bring such circumstances to light, as clearly shew, that if ingenuity were racked to invent a fituation, that would be the most distressing and insupportable to the human race; it could never invent one, that would fuit the description better, than the-colonial flavery.

If this then be the case, and if slaves, notwithstanding all the arguments to the contrary, are exquifitely miserable, we ask you receivers, by what right you re-

duce them to so wretched a fituation?

You reply, that you buy them; that your money constitutes your right, and that, like all other things which you purchase, they are wholly at your own disposal.

Upon this principle alone it was, that we professed to view your treatment, or examine your right, when we faid, that \* the question resolved itself into two separate parts for discussion; into the African commerce, as explained in the history of flavery, and the subsequent " flavery in the colonies, as founded on the equity of the " commerce." Now, fince it appears that this commerce, upon the fullest investigation, is contrary to † "The principles of law and government, the dictates of reason, the common maxims of equity, the laws of nature, " the

<sup>\*</sup> Page 40.

"the admonitions of conscience, and, in short, the whole dostrine of natural religion," it is evident that the right, which is founded upon it, must be the same; and that if those things only are lawful in the fight of God, which are either virtuous in themselves, or proceed from virtuous principles, you have no right over them at all.

You yourselves also confess this. For when we ask you, whether any human being has a right to sell you, you immediately answer, No; as if nature revolted at the thought, and as if it was so contradictory to your own feelings, as not to require consideration. But who are you, that have this exclusive charter of trading in the liberties of mankind? When did nature, or rather the Author of nature, make so partial a distinction between you and them? When did He say, that you should have the privilege of selling others, and that others

should not have the privilege of selling you?

Now fince you confess, that no person whatever has a right to dispose of you in this manner, you must confels also, that those things are unlawful to be done to you, which are usually done in consequence of the sale. Let us suppose then, that in consequence of the commerce you were forced into a ship; that you were conveyed to another country; that you were fold there; that you were confined to inceffant labour; that you were pinched by continual hunger and thirst; and subject to be whipped, cut, and mangled at difcretion, and all this at the hands of those, whom you had never offended; would you not think that you had a right to resist their treatment? Would you not resist it with a safe conscience? And would you not be surprized, if your refistance should be termed rebellion?—By the former promises you must answer, Yes .- Such then is the case with the wretched Africans. They have a right to refist your proceedings. They can resist them, and yet they cannot justly be considered as rebellious. For though we suppose them to have been guilty of crimes to one another; though we suppose them to have been the most abandoned and execrable of men, yet are they perfectly innocent with respect to you receivers. You have no right

right to touch even the hair of their heads without their own consent. It is not your money, that can invest you with a right. Human liberty can neither be bought nor sold. Every lash that you give them is unjust. It is a lash against nature and religion, and will surely stand recorded against you, since they are all, with respect to your *impious* selves, in a state of nature; in a state of original dissociation; perfectly free.

#### C H A P. XI.

Having now confidered both the commerce and flavery, it remains only to collect fuch arguments as are scattered in different parts of the work, and to make such additional remarks, as present themselves on the subject.

And first, let us ask you, who have studied the law of nature, and you, who are learned in the law of the land, if all property must not be inferiour in its nature to its possession, or, in other words, (for it is a case, which every person must bring home to his own breast) if you fuppose that any human being can have a property in your/elves? Let us ask you appraisers, who scientifically know the value of things, if any human creature is equivalent only to any of the trinkets that you wear, or at most, to any of the horses that you ride: or in other words, if you have ever considered the most costly things that you have valued, as equivalent to yourselves? Let us ask you rationalists, if man, as a reasonable being, is not accountable for his actions, and let us put the same question to you, who have studied the divine writings? Let us ask you parents, if ever you thought that you possessed an authority as such, or if ever you expected a duty from your fons; and let us ask you fons, if ever you felt an impulse in your own breasts to obey your parents. Now, if you should all answer as we could wish. if you should all answer consistently with reason, nature, and the revealed voice of God, what a dreadful argument will present itself against the commerce and slavery of the human species, when we restect, that no man whatever can be bought or reduced to the situation of a slave, but he must instantly become a brute, he must instantly be reduced to the value of those things, which were made for his own use and convenience; he must instantly cease to be accountable for his actions, and his authority as a parent, and his duty as a son, must be instantly no more.

Neither does it escape our notice, when we are speaking of the fatal wound which every social duty must receive, how considerably Christianity suffers by the conduct of you receivers. For by prosecuting this impious commerce, you keep the Africans in a state of perpetual ferocity and barbarism; and by prosecuting it in such a manner, as must represent your religion, as a system of sobbery and oppression, you not only oppose the propagation of the gospel, as far as you are able yourselves, but throw the most certain impediments in the way of others, who might attempt the glorious and important task.

Such also is the effect, which the subsequent slavery in the colonies must produce. For by your inhuman treatment of the unfortunate Africans there, you create the same insuperable impediments to a conversion. For how must they detest the very name of Christians, when you Christians are deformed by so many and dreadful vices? How must they detest that system of religion, which appears to resist the natural rights of men, and to give a fanction to brutality and murder?

But, as we are now mentioning Christianity, we must pause for a little time, to make a few remarks on the arguments which are usually deduced from thence by the receivers, in defence of their system of oppression. For the reader may readily suppose, that, if they did not hesitate to bring the Old Testament in support of their barbarities, they would hardly let the New escape them.

St. Paul, having converted Onesimus to the Christian faith, who was a fugitive slave of Philemon, sent him back to his master. This circumstance has furnished the receivers with a plea, that Christianity encourages slavery. But they have not only strained the passages which

they

they produce in support of their affertions, but are ignorant of historical facts. The benevolent apostle, in the letter which he wrote to Philemon, the master of Onesimus, addresses him to the following effect: " I send "him back to you, but not in his former capacity, \* not " now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother be-" loved. In this manner I beseech you to receive him, for "though I could enjoin you to do it, yet I had rather it " should be a matter of your own will, than of necessity."

It appears that the same Onesimus, when he was fent back, was no longer a flave, that he was a minister of the gospel, that he was joined with Tychicus in an ecclefiastical commission to the church of the Colossians, and was afterwards bishop of Ephesus. If language there fore has any meaning, and if history has recorded a fact which may be believed, there is no case more opposite to the doctrine of the receivers, than this which they pro-

duce in its support.

It is faid again, that Christianity, among the many important precepts which it contains, does not furnish us with one for the abolition of flavery. But the reason is obvious, Slavery at the time of the introduction of the gospel was universally prevalent, and if Christianity had abruptly declared, that the millions of flaves should have been made free, who were then in the world, it would have been univerfally rejected, as containing doctrines that were dangerous, if not destructive, to society. In order therefore that it might be univerfally received, it never meddled, by any positive precept, with the civil institutions of the times: but though it does not expressly fay, that "you shall neither buy, nor sell, nor pos-"fess a slave," it is evident that, in its general tenour, it fufficiently militates against the custom.

The first doctrine which it inculcates, is that of brotherly love. It commands good will towards men. It enjoins us to love our neighbours as ourselves, and to do unto all men, as we would that they should do unto us. And how can any man fulfil this scheme of universal

benevolence.

<sup>\*</sup> Epist. to Philemon.

benevolence, who reduces an unfortunate person against his will, to the most insupportable of all human conditions; who considers him as his private property, and treats him, not as a brother, nor as one of the same parentage with himself, but as an animal of the brute creation?

But the most important doctrine is that, by which we are assured that mankind are to exist in a suture state, and to give an account of those actions, which they have severally done in the sless. This strikes at the very root of slavery. For how can any man be justly called to an account for his actions, whose actions are not at his own disposal? This is the case with the \* proper slave. His liberty is absolutely bought and appropriated; and if the purchase is just and equitable, he is under the necessity of perpetrating any crime, which the purchaser may order him to commit, or, in other words, of ceasing to be accountable for his actions.

These doctrines therefore are sufficient to shew, that slavery is incompatible with the Christian system. The Europeans considered them as such, when, at the close of the twelfth century, they resisted their hereditary prejudices, and occasioned its abolition. Hence one, among many other proofs, that Christianity was the production of infinite wisdom; that though it did not take such express cognizance of the wicked national institutions of the times, as should hinder its reception, it should yet contain such doctrines, as, when it should be fully established, would be sufficient for the abolition of them all.

Thus then is the argument of you receivers ineffectual, and your conduct impious. For, by the profecution of this

<sup>\*</sup> The African slave is of this description; and we could wish, in all our arguments on the present subject, to be understood as having spoken only of proper flaves. The slave who is condemned to the oar, to the fortifications, and other publick works, is in a different predicament. His liberty is not appropriated, and therefore none of those consequences can be justly drawn, which have been deduced in the present case.

this wicked flavery and commerce, you not only oppose the propagation of that gospel which was ordered to be preached unto every creature, and bring it into contempt, but you oppose its tenets also: first, because you violate that law of universal benevolence, which was to take away those hateful distinctions of Jew and Gentile, Greek and Barbarian, bond and free, which prevailed when the gospel was introduced; and secondly, because, as every man is to give an account of his actions hereafter, it is necessary that he should be free.

Another argument yet remains, which, though nature will absolutely turn pale at the recital, cannot possibly be omitted. In those wars, which are made for the sake of procuring flaves, it is evident that the contest must be generally obstinate, and that great numbers must be flain on both fides, before the event can be determined. This we may reasonably apprehend to be the case: and we have \* shewn, that there have not been wanting instances, where the conquerors have been so incensed at the refistance they have found, that their spirit of vengeance has entirely got the better of their avarice, and they have murdered, in cool blood, every individual, without discrimination, either of age or sex. From these and other circumstances, we thought we had sufficient reason to conclude, that, where ten were supposed to be taken, an hundred, including the victors and vanquished, might be supposed to perish. Now, as the annual exportation from Africa confifts of an hundred thousand men, and as the two orders, of those who are privately kidnapped by individuals, and of those, who are publickly feized by virtue of the authority of their prince, compose together, at least, nine-tenths of the African flaves, it follows, that about ten thousand confist of convicts and prisoners of war. The last order is the most numerous. Let us suppose then that only fix thousand of this order are annually fent into fervitude, and it will immediately appear that no less than fixty thousand people

<sup>\*</sup> See the description of an African battle, p. 72.

people annually perish in those wars, which are made only for the purpose of procuring slaves. But that this number, which we believe to be by no means exaggerated, may be free from all objection, we will include those in the estimate, who die as they are travelling to the ships. Many of these unfortunate people have a journey of one thousand miles to perform on foot, and are driven like sheep through inhospitable woods and deferts, where they frequently die in great numbers, from satigue and want. Now if those, who thus perish on the African continent, by war and travelling, we subjoin those, who afterwards perish on the voyage, and in the seasoning together, it will appear that, in every yearly attempt to supply the colonies, an bundred thousand must perish, even before one useful individual can be obtained.

Gracious God! how wicked, how beyond all example impious, must be that servitude, which cannot be carried on without the continual murder of fo many and innocent persons! What punishment is not to be expected for fuch monstrous and unparalleled barbarities! For if the blood of one man, unjustly shed, cries with so loud a voice for the divine vengeance, how shall the cries and groans of an hundred thousand men, annually murdered, ascend the celestial mansions, and bring down that punishment, which such enormities deserve! But do we mention punishment? Do we allude to that punishment, which shall be inflicted on men as individuals, in a future life? Do we allude to that awful day, which shall furely come, when the master shall behold his murdered negroe face to face? When a train of mutilated flaves shall be brought against him? When he shall stand confounded and abashed? Or, do we allude to that punishment, which may be inflicted on them here, as members of a wicked community? For as a body politick, if its members are ever so numerous, may be consideredas an whole, acting of itself, and by itself, in all affairs in

<sup>\*</sup> The lowest computation is 40,000, see p. 93.

in which it is concerned, so it is accountable, as such, for its conduct; and as these kinds of polities have only their existence here, so it is only in this world, that, as fuch, they can be punished.

" Now, whether we consider the crime, with respect " to the individuals immediately concerned in this most so barbarous and cruel traffick, or whether we confider it as \* patronized and encouraged by the laws of the " land, it presents to our view an equal degree of enor-" mity. A crime, founded on a dreadful pre-eminence " in wickedness,—a crime, which being both of indi-" viduals and the nation, must sometime draw down " upon us the heaviest judgment of Almighty God, who " made of one blood all the fons of men, and who gave to " all equally a natural right to liberty; and who, ruling " all the kingdoms of the earth with equal providen-" tial justice, cannot suffer such deliberate, such mon-" ftrous iniquity, to pass long unpunished. †

But alas! he feems already to have interfered on the occasion! The t violent and supernatural agitations of all the elements, which, for a feries of years, have prevailed in those European settlements, where the unfortunate Africans are retained in a state of slavery, and which have brought unspeakable calamities on the inhabitants, and publick losses on the states to which they feverally belong, are so many awful visitations of God for

† Sermon preached before the University of Cambridge, by the Rev. Peter Peckard.

<sup>\*</sup> The legislature has squandered away more money in the prosecution of the flave trade, within twenty years, than in any other trade whatever, having granted from the year 1750, to the year 1770, the fum of 300,000 pounds.

<sup>†</sup> The first noted earthquake at Jamaica, happened June the 7th, 1692, when Port Royal was totally funk. This was succeeded by one in the year 1697, and by another in the year 1722, from which time to the present, these regions of the globe seem to have been feverely visited, but particularly during the last fix or seven years. See a general account of the calamities, occasioned by the late tremendous hurricanes and earthquakes in the West Indian islands, by Mr. Fowler.

for this inhuman violation of his laws. And it is not perhaps unworthy of remark, that as the subjects of Great-Britain have two thirds of this impious commerce in their own hands, so they have suffered in the same proportion, or \* more severely than the rest.

How far these missortunes may appear to be acts of providence, and to create an alarm to those who have been accustomed to refer every effect to its apparent cause; who have been habituated to stop there, and to overlook the singer of God, because it is slightly covered under the veil of secondary laws we will not pretend to determine? But this we will affert with considence, that the Europeans have richly deserved them all; that the tear of sympathy, which can hardly be restrained on other melancholy occasions, seems to forget to flow at the relation of these; and that we can never, with any shadow of justice, wish prosperity to the undertakings of those, whose success must be at the expence of the happiness of millions of their fellow-creatures.

But this is sufficient. For if liberty is only an adventitious right; if men are by no means superiour to brutes; if every social duty is a curse; if cruelty is highly to be esteemed; if murder is strictly honourable, and Christianity is a lye; then it is evident, that the African slavery may be pursued, without either the remorse of conscience, or the imputation of a crime. But if the contrary of this is true, which reason must immediately evince, it is evident that no custom established among men was ever more impious; since it is contrary to reason, justice, nature, the principles of law and government, the whole dostrine, in short, of natural religion, and the revealed voice of God.

<sup>\*</sup> The many ships of war belonging to the British navy, which were lost with all their crews in these dreadful hurricanes, will sufficiently prove the fact.

# B O O K S

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